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FREEBIES ELECTION DRAWS CLOSE



(Left) Delhi CM Atishi marlena with Arvind Kejriwal with during the road show from Kalkaji. (Centre) BJP leader Amit Shah with Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva and party candidate from Jangpura constituency Tarvinder Singh Marwah. (Right) MP Priyanka Gandhi during a roadshow in the support of congress candidate Abhishek Dutt in Kasturba Nagar in New Delhi on Monday. Photo: Ranjan Dimri and PTI

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The month long Delhi Assembly poll campaign turned into AAP freebies vs BJP freebies vs Congress freebies as the high-voltage campaigning ended at 5 PM on Monday with top leaders from major political parties including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi traded fierce jabs. They accused each other of corruption and failing the city's residents. The fiercely contested electoral battle has been defined by an unprecedented use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated spoofs, sharp political jibes with big guns from all three major parties holding roadshows, public meetings, padayatras and bike rallies in a final push to sway voters. As the campaign ended on Monday evening, AAP and BJP have claimed to form the next government with Kejriwal predicting to win 55 for sure which can go up to 60. Addressing a press conference alongwith all BJP MPs from Delhi, Union minister Piyush Goyal claimed that the BJP is headed for a massive poll victory in Delhi, similar to what happened

recently in Maharashtra and Haryana. While the AAP branded the BJP as the "Bharatiya Jhootha Party" (party of liars) and "Gali Galoch Party" (abusive party), Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to the AAP as "AAP-Daa" (disaster) and its leader Kejriwal as "Ghoshna Mantri" (minister of announcements). Congress, attempting to regain relevance, has called Kejriwal "Farziwal" (Fake) and a "Chhota Recharge" (small recharge) of Modi. Kejriwal also slammed the Election Commission, accusing it of favouring the BJP. Interestingly, the Delhi elections began with the AAP in the pole position to gain power yet again. But has something changed as we enter the last lap before the voting on February 5. BJP aiming to reclaim power in Delhi after more than 25 years, held 22 roadshows and rallies across the city. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP President J P Nadda, and several BJP chief ministers were at the forefront of the canvassing on Monday. On the last day of campaigning, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lambasted the AAP government in

Delhi saying it was promoting only those students to Class 10 who were guaranteed to clear the board examination to guard its image. "I have heard that in Delhi they do not promote students to Class 10 if they perform poorly in Class 9," Modi said in an interaction with a group of students. "They only allow those students in Class 10 who are guaranteed to clear the exam. They fear that if the results are poor, the image of their government will be tarnished," the PM said in the interaction, a short video of which was shared by BJP leaders on social media. Congress, seeking a revival after failing to win any seats in the last two elections, also intensified its efforts. Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi held separate roadshows in Kalkaji and Kasturba Nagar, aiming to regain the party's lost foothold in the capital. BJP has changed its strategy from 2020 and is no longer calling the AAP's freebies as 'revadis' - in fact, it is promising to continue them. Whose face will attract voters? Will people trust Kejriwal again or is the vote this time in the name of Narendra Modi, who is asking people for one chance in Delhi?

BJP campaign got a last-minute boost with Centre's Annual budget announcement. The party was quick to come up with advertisements claiming it was Modi's gift for Delhi. This major announcement became a talking point not just in Delhi but even across the country as it impacts the large pool of salaried households. Around 45 percent middle class voters, a key support base of Modi, has traditionally been a stronghold of the BJP during the Lok Sabha polls, but recently, it felt overlooked as the party has focused on other vote banks. Traditionally, this vote bank has largely split between the BJP and AAP, but this time on the ground, the feedback is that the middle class could consolidate for the BJP after the announcement of income tax exemptions for up to Rs 12 lakh. The 8th Pay Commission announcement is another positive for the BJP, as a large number of government employees are based in Delhi as voters. There are 20 percent Dalit vote in the capital, which is primarily based in the jhuggis and clusters and it has been seen favourably towards the AAP, but may see a split now. If the jhuggi voters and Muslims remain fully behind the AAP, it could win big

with 50+ seats. But if there is a split in the jhuggi voters and the middle class consolidates behind the BJP, there could be a repeat of Haryana and Maharashtra results in Delhi. Voters residing in jhuggi-jhopdi (JJ) clusters have been backing the AAP for the past two elections. These voters are largely poor and the beneficiaries of free bijli-paani, free bus travel for women, mohalla clinics and more. BJP has focused on the slums and jhuggis clusters promising them a pucca house to everyone in the jhuggis, and the promise to continue free water and power, is what is giving BJP a look-in here. The BJP strongly feels that there will be a split in the 20% Dalit vote this time, which primarily lives in the jhuggis, and this will hurt the AAP badly. Overall, the AAP and BJP are in a neck-and-neck battle here. The second big factor in Delhi is the 13 percent Muslim vote, and at least 10-12 seats in Delhi where Muslim voters are pre-dominant. For over a decade now, the Muslims have consolidated in Delhi behind the AAP, bringing the party big victories. The BJP's chances in Delhi would have greatly improved if the Muslim votes had split between the AAP, Congress and Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM.



Rupee all time low

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI

MARKETS



The Rupee plunged 55 paise to close at an all-time low of 87.17 (provisional) against the US Dollar on Monday, as global market sentiments were impacted after the Trump administration slapped tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China. Forex traders said the Indian rupee touched a fresh all-time low on a surge in the US Dollar index and weak global markets after Trump Tariffs on Canada Mexico, and China triggered fears of a broad trade war. Donald Trump slapped Canada and Mexico with 25 per cent duties and China with a 10 per cent duty. At the interbank foreign exchange, the Rupee opened on a weak note at 87.00 and touched an intraday low of 87.29 against the American currency during the session. The local unit finally settled at a record closing low of 87.17 (provisional), lower by 55 paise over its previous close. On Friday, the rupee settled flat at 86.62 against the American currency. "We expect the rupee to trade with negative bias on strong US Dollar and FII

outflows amid a weak trend in the domestic markets. Worries over tariffs by the US administration may also pressurise the rupee," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan. However, any central bank intervention may support the rupee. Traders may take cues from ISM manufacturing PMI data from the US. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the RBI's monetary policy meeting this week," Choudhary added. Meanwhile, the Dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 1.01 per cent higher at 109.46. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 1.41 per cent to USD 76.74 per barrel in futures trade.

GRAP III revoked

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Monday (February 3) lifted Stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) across Delhi-NCR, effective immediately. However, measures under GRAP Stage I and II will remain in place to control pollution levels, according to a statement from the CAQM. The use of BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel cars (4-wheelers) has been allowed in Delhi and nearby NCR districts after



Terror attack leaves one dead, two injured

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A retired Territorial army soldier, father of four daughters and one son, was killed in cold blood by unidentified terrorists inside his home in the Behibagh area of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Monday. The wife of an ex-serviceman and another close relative, present inside the home, also received bullet injuries in the targeted strike, the first so far in 2025. The ex-serviceman, identified as Manzoor Ahmad Wagay, was rushed to the Government Medical College Hospital, Anantnag by family members where he succumbed to his fatal injuries. According to preliminary reports, both the women, including the wife of an ex-serviceman, were undergoing treatment and

their condition was stated to be stable. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah reacted strongly to the heinous act of violence. "Deeply saddened by the tragic killing of ex-serviceman Manzoor Ahmad Wagay Sahab in Kulgam. My heartfelt condolences to his family, and prayers for the swift recovery of his injured wife and daughter. Such heinous violence has no place in our society and must be condemned in the strongest terms. May peace and justice prevail" the Office of Chief Minister said in a post on X (earlier Twitter). According to local reports, the terrorists struck around 2.00 p.m. in the thickly populated area of Behibagh and managed to flee from the spot without facing any resistance.

Rahul questions Modi's Trump invite, Jaishankar refutes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Monday created a flutter by raking up the issue of Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'not being invited for coronation of US President Donald Trump last month to which the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar dismissed the claim as false and accused the Congress of harming India's global image. Jaishankar asserted that no discussion about an invitation to Prime Minister Modi ever took place and pointed out that the Prime Minister does not attend such events. Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijju too strongly objected to the remarks. "It is common knowledge that our PM does not attend such events. In fact, India is generally represented by Special Envoys," he clarified. Jaishankar represented India at Donald Trump's inauguration on January 20. He was seated in the first row during the ceremony. Mocking the Central government during Motion of Thanks on the President's address in Lok Sabh, Rahul claimed that if the Modi government had taken economic policies seriously, then the government would



(Left) Rahul Gandhi speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament. (Right) MEA S Jaishankar

not have had to send Foreign Minister S Jaishankar to the US to get an invitation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Donald Trump's swearing-in ceremony. "When we talk to the United States, we would not send the Foreign Minister three-four times to get an invite for our Prime Minister because if we had a production system and we were working on these technologies, the US President would come here and invite the Prime Minister," said Rahul. Rijju said the LoP cannot make such serious, unsubstantiated statements. "This is about the relationship between two countries. He is making unverified statements about the invitation of our Prime Minister. He should be responsible. If the Leader of the Opposition has the information, he must tell the House who has told him that the Foreign Minister visited for this purpose," Rijju said. Replying to him, Rahul Gandhi said he would apologise for disturbing the Parliamentary Affairs Minister peace of mind but the Congress leader continued with another his jab raking up the China issue and said that the Indian Army contradicted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's claims about Chinese army intrusion in Ladakh.

BJP moves Privilege against Sonia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs on Monday moved a privilege motion against Rajya Sabha MP Sonia Gandhi over her "poor thing" remark on President Droupadi Murmu. "We write this with great dismay about certain unparliamentary, derogatory and demeaning remarks recently made by Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, against the Hon'ble President of India, which warrant serious consideration and disciplinary action," the MPs



wrote to Rajya Sabha chairman. The MPs alleged that the statement was a "clear manifestation of elitist and anti-tribal mindset of" Sonia Gandhi, who they claimed "is yet to understand the struggle and sensitivity of a tribal poor." "Given the gravity of this issue, we humbly urge you to take cognizance of this matter and initiate appropriate disciplinary action against Smt. Sonia Gandhi," the MPs said. "Such action is imperative not only to uphold the sanctity of parliamentary rules but also to reinforce the principles of decorum and mutual respect that are foundational to the effective functioning of our democratic institutions."

India's Chandrika Tandon shines at Grammys with 'Triveni'

ABHI SINGHAL ■ NEW DELHI

Under the dazzling glow of stage lights and the thunderous applause of a global audience Chandrika Krishnamurthy Tandon at the age of 71, made India proud with her first Grammy award for the album 'Triveni' in the Best New Age, Ambient or Chant Album category. The Grammy Awards were organised by the Recording Academy, and was held at the Crypto.Com Arena in Los Angeles on late Sunday. Tandon, an Indian-American vocalist and entrepreneur was earlier also nominated for her album 'Soul Call' in 2009. Her now won work 'Triveni' is a collaborative work with South African flautist Wouter Kellerman and Japanese cellist Eru Matsumoto. As the music industry's most

prestigious honour, the Grammys have long been a platform where legends are born, history is made, and emotions run high. While receiving the award alongside her collaborators, Chandrika Tandon said, "Music is love, music is light, and music is laughter and let's all be surrounded by love, light, and laughter. Thank you for the music, and thank you to everyone who makes music." Triveni, her album, reflects the essence of its name that symbolises the confluence of India's sacred rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati. It brings together three globally acclaimed artists: Indian singer-composer Sonu Tandon, Grammy-winning flautist Wouter Kellerman, and Japanese guitarist Matsumoto. The album weaves ancient



Eru Matsumoto, from left, Wouter Kellerman, and Chandrika Tandon accept the award for best new age, ambient, or chant album for "Triveni" during the 67th annual Grammy Awards. PTI

ambience, and global traditions appeals to a wide audience while staying deeply rooted in cultural authenticity. Released on August 30, 2024, each of the seven tracks on 'Triveni' tells its own story while contributing to its

overarching theme of healing resonance. The songs are: "Pathway to Light", "Chant in A", "Journey Within", "Aether's Serenade", "Ancient Moon", "Open Sky", and "Seeking Shakti". Tandon also took her Instagram to express gratitude for her first Grammy. She wrote, "Honoured to receive a GRAMMY for our collaborative album Triveni. A moment that reminds me that music is love, music ignites the light within all of us, and even in our darkest days, music spreads joy and laughter. Congratulations to all the other nominees in our category. Thank you for the music, and thank you for each and everyone that creates and supports the music; may all our lives be enveloped in Love Light Laughter."

A DIP OF FAITH



A Kinnar Akhara member tosses a trident while taking a holy dip on the 'Basant Panchami' during the ongoing Mahakumbh Mela, at the Sangam in Prayagraj. PTI

Indian knowledge traditions need joint research efforts: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav stated that Dattopant Thengadi, with the personality of a sage, illuminated society like a lamp through the brilliance of his wisdom and philosophy. His visionary ideas in the fields of agriculture, labor welfare, and Swadeshi are like guiding stars that will continue to inspire generations. As a founding member of the Vidyarthi Parishad, his role significantly shaped thought and action. Yadav emphasized that Thengadi viewed Hindutva not just as a form of nationalism but as a philosophy of universal brotherhood. He believed that the concept of Hindutva transcends the boundaries of the animate and inanimate, encompassing individuals, society, the nation, and all of humanity. In today's context, his ideas have

become even more relevant. The whole world looks to India with hope for guidance and solutions to various global challenges. India can fulfill this role through its rich ancient knowledge traditions. In this regard, the need for research on the diverse dimensions of Indian knowledge traditions has become more pressing. Dr. Yadav called for collaborative efforts, stating that along with the government, society must also actively contribute to this research. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav was speaking at the Bhoomi Pujan and commencement of the new campus building of the Dattopant Thengadi Research Institute. Thinker and writer Suresh Soni graced the occasion as a distinguished Saraswat guest. Yadav attended the Bhoomi Pujan and commencement of construction work as the chief

guest at a programme organized on Link Road Number 3 on the occasion of Basantotsav. The event began with Dr. Yadav garlanding the picture of Baba Mahakal and planting of a sapling at the puja site. He lit the ceremonial lamp and garlanded the pictures of Maa Saraswati and the revered Dattopant Thengadi Ji. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav released the annual souvenir 'Sanket Rekha' of the Dattopant Thengadi Research Institute. He also unveiled the poster for the upcoming National Researchers Meet, scheduled to be held from 1 to 3 March 2025. Yadav stated that Gurukuls and ancient universities in India reflect the intellectual strength and knowledge power of Indian society. He highlighted that, according to Indian culture, the true essence of life lies in utilizing every moment for the welfare of society, which is considered the

highest form of spiritual fulfillment or attaining salvation while living. Indian philosophy inspires individuals to embrace love, and brotherhood, steering them away from conflict. He underlined the importance of initiatives like the Dattopant Thengadi Research Institute, which are essential for conducting holistic research on various aspects of Bharatiyata, including the unique heritage of tribal societies. Speaking about the transformative impact of the New Education Policy implemented under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dr. Yadav noted that it prioritizes practical experience over rote learning. Through this approach, we must advance towards research that ensures the welfare and benefit of humanity, he said. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav further said that the Bhoomi Pujan of the Dattopant Thengadi Research Institute, held

on the auspicious occasion of Basant Panchami alongside the worship of Goddess Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, will pave the way to channel the energy and power of knowledge for the betterment of society. Thinker and writer Suresh Soni said that Dattopant Thengadi Ji was the manifestation of Bharatiya Rishi Pragna. His speciality was to keep Indian philosophy at the center in all areas of life. From personal life to world peace, his thoughts were limited. Forgetfulness and lack of correct information is the problem of Indian academic world. Referring to Macaulay's education policy, he said that instead of life values like self-centeredness and consumerism, it is necessary to establish Indian life values like sacrifice, restraint, and dedication and develop an Indian perspective to understand Indianness.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav with senior RSS leader Suresh Soni during the foundation stone laying ceremony of the new campus building of Dattopant Thengadi Research Institute, in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

5-day training on infectious animal diseases begins

PNS ■ JABALPUR

A five-day training program on diagnosing infectious animal diseases was inaugurated on Monday, at the Department of Veterinary Parasitology, College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Jabalpur. The program aims to provide detailed knowledge of traditional and modern diagnostic techniques to 20 practicing veterinary officers from various districts. This training will help them diagnose and treat diseases more accurately, quickly, and effectively, benefiting livestock farmers across the state. Improved animal health will enhance productivity, reduce economic losses, and increase farmers' income. The training program is finan-

cially supported by the Madhya Pradesh Government's Animal Husbandry and Dairy Department. The event was attended by Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Mandeep Sharma as the Chief Guest, along with Dr. Sunil Nayak (Director, Extension Education) as the Special Guest, Dr. RK Sharma (Dean), and Dr. Giridhari Das (Head of the Department and Training Coordinator). In his address, Vice-Chancellor Dr. Mandeep Sharma emphasized that accurate diagnosis is the key to effective treatment, a principle widely accepted in the scientific community. He highlighted that accurate diagnosis is crucial for treating and preventing pathogenic diseases in both humans and animals, yet it remains one of the most neglected areas in veterinary science.

Bacterial, viral, helminthic, and hemoprotozoal infections severely impact the rural economy. Infectious diseases in livestock often appear in both clinical and sub-clinical forms, with the latter being more common and difficult to diagnose. Dr. Sharma pointed out that even well-nourished and well-managed infected animals fail to reach their full productivity due to compromised immune systems, making them more susceptible to further infections. While veterinarians can usually identify clinical cases, detecting sub-clinical conditions is far more challenging. This training program presents a significant opportunity for veterinary officers across the state. It will enhance expertise in animal disease diagnosis while also contributing to the strengthening of Madhya Pradesh's rural economy.

Collector fims up stand against begging

Bhopal: In fresh norms issued by District Collector Kaushalendra Vikram Singh on Monday, both seeking and giving alms in the state capital will now result in penal action. Amid rising incidences of begging, the district administration said that CCTV surveillance devices will be used to identify and track those violating the new guidelines, and FIRs will be lodged against repeat offenders. The Social Justice Department and Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) will jointly work on the implementation of the new directives. BMC Additional Commissioner Tina Yadav stated that the civic body will provide land for setting up shelters for beggars. Meanwhile, Joint Director of the Social Justice Department, RK Singh, said that the existing night shelters in Arif Nagar

could be converted into beggar homes (Bhikshu Grih). He mentioned that the department had been planning the initiative for a long time, and now that the collector has issued orders, a letter has been sent to the municipal corporation. Once permission is granted, all beggars in the district will be relocated to these shelters, where they will be provided with basic facilities. This order is also being linked to the upcoming Global Investor Summit, scheduled to be held in Bhopal on February 24 and 25. The orders have been issued under the provisions of Section 163 of the Indian Civil Security Code 2023. Earlier this month, a case was registered against a beggar at the MP Nagar police station after he misbehaved with a person who had refused to give him money.

Regular vehicle fitness checks, key to road safety: Singh

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Transport Minister Uday Pratap Singh has said that keeping road safety in mind, fitness checking of vehicles should be done regularly. He said that concrete efforts should be made to increase transport revenue. Transport Minister Singh was reviewing the departmental activities in a meeting held in Mantralaya on Monday. Transport Secretary Manish Singh and Transport Commissioner Vivek Sharma were also present at the meeting. Transport Minister Singh directed to make appointments for vacant posts in the department and to work on new recruitments within the time limit. It was told in the meeting that the number of registered vehicles in the state is around 2 crore 34 lakh 44 thousand. Out

of these, the number of transport vehicles is more than 11 lakh 42 thousand 500. Minister Singh directed that the fitness process of vehicles older than 15 years should be simplified. Five registered scrapping facilities centers are working in the state for scrapping facilities of old vehicles. Out of these, three centers are functional in Bhopal district and one each in Indore and Gwalior districts. It was told in the meeting that obtaining a Pollution Control Certificate has been made mandatory to prevent damage to the environment due to gases emitted from vehicles. To provide convenience to vehicle owners, the work of issuing an online Pollution Control Certificate by checking the emission standards of vehicles in a transparent manner has been started from August 1, 2024. In the year 2024, pollu-

tion of about 2 lakh 60 thousand vehicles was checked. Transport Minister Singh directed the departmental officers to get high-security number plates installed in all vehicles. It was told in the meeting that the Transport Department has a target revenue income of Rs 5100 crore in the year 2024-25. By the end of December 2024, revenue income of Rs 3350 crore has been received. Due to the increase in the number of electric vehicles in the state, departmental income has decreased. Driver Training Center and Vehicle Location Tracking Device were also discussed in the meeting. Transport Minister Singh also gave instructions to bring as many four-wheelers as possible under its purview. Electronic Detailed Accident Report was also discussed in the meeting.



Women and Child Development Minister Nirmla Bhuria with recipients of Ujjain Samman-2025 during a group photo session at Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) in Bhopal on Monday. The programme was organised by Anunay Education and Welfare Society and IHM. Pioneer photo

National Poetry Awards announced in memory of Vishnu Khare

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Dedicated to art, literature, and culture for over 40 years, Vanmali Srijanpeeth has announced the Vishnu Khare National Poetry Awards 2025 in memory of Vishnu Khare, a distinguished poet, critic, translator, and journalist born in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh. The announcement was made by Santosh Choubey, National President of Vanmali Srijanpeeth, who stated that the awards will honor literary figures in four different categories. Renowned critic, poet, and translator Nandkishore Acharya (Bikaner) will be honored with the Vishnu Khare Criticism Award, while the Vishnu Khare Translation Award will be conferred upon senior translator A. Aravindakshan (Kerala). The Vishnu Khare

Poetry Award will be presented to acclaimed writer, poet, translator, and critic Leeladhar Mandloi (New Delhi), and the Vishnu Khare Young Poetry Award will be given to emerging poet Parvati Tirkey (Jharkhand). Notably, Nandkishore Acharya, a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award, has made significant contributions to criticism, poetry, drama, education, civilization studies, and editing. He remains actively engaged in Madhya Pradesh's literary landscape. A. Aravindakshan, former Vice-Chancellor of the Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, Wardha, is a distinguished critic, writer, and translator of the present era. His body of work includes 20 critical books in Hindi, five in Malayalam, one novel, and 15 translated books.

Senior poet and critic Leeladhar Mandloi, who will receive the Vishnu Khare Poetry Award, has previously served as the Director General of Doordarshan. His literary contributions include poetry collections such as Ghar-Ghar Ghooma, Raat-Biraat, Upasthit Hai Samudra, and folk tale collections like Andaman-Nicobar Ki Lok Kathayen, Chand Ka Dhabba, and Ped Bhi Chalthe Hain. Dr. Parvati Tirkey, recipient of the Young Poetry Award, is a promising poet with a deep interest in poetry and folk songs. Her debut poetry collection is titled Phir Uga. The Poetry Award Ceremony will be held in Bhopal from February 19 to 21, 2025. On February 19 and 20, Katha Samay will take place at Rabindranath Tagore University, while the Vishnu Khare Poetry Award ceremony will be hosted on

February 21 at the Vanmali Auditorium, Scope University, Bhopal. The event will feature the special presence of Dr. Madhuri Ramdhari (Mauritius), Secretary General of the World Hindi Secretariat. The ceremony will also be attended by prominent literary figures such as Mamta Kalia (New Delhi), Arun Kamal (Patna), Akhilesh (Lucknow), Oma Sharma (Mumbai), Manisha Kulshreshtha (Jaipur), Mahesh Darpan, Prakash Manu, Devi Prasad Mishra (New Delhi), Neelesh Raghuvanshi, Mukesh Verma, Santosh Choubey (Bhopal), Mahesh Verma, Ramkumar Tiwari (Chhattisgarh), and over 100 coordinators from various Vanmali Srijan Centers. Several notable writers from Bhopal and across Madhya Pradesh will also participate in different sessions of the event.

Man accidentally swallows denture, AIIMS surgeons remove from food pipe

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A multidisciplinary team from the Departments of Surgical Gastroenterology and Cardiothoracic Surgery at AIIMS Bhopal successfully removed a denture that had accidentally slipped into an elderly patient's food pipe. The complex and delicate procedure was performed using an advanced thoracoscopic (VATS) technique, avoiding conventional open-chest surgery. This patient had few fainting episodes; initially thought to be due to seizures but these were found out to be due to heart problem later for which a pacemaker was recently implanted. During one fainting episode, the patient inadvertently lost his denture. Shortly thereafter, he began experiencing difficulty in swallowing. Subsequent medical evaluations revealed that the denture had slipped into his food pipe and got stuck there leading to difficulty in eating. Despite multiple endoscopic attempts at various healthcare centers, the denture could not be removed. The patient was then referred to AIIMS Bhopal for surgical intervention.

"The denture had penetrated deeply into the esophageal wall and required careful removal through the chest. Given the patient's recent pacemaker placement and associated surgical risks, this was a challenging case," explained Dr. Vishal Gupta, Additional Professor in the Department of Surgical Gastroenterology, who led the surgical team. He was joined by Dr. Yogesh Niwariya (Cardiothoracic Surgery), Dr. Zainab (Anesthesia), and Dr. Sriram and Dr. Gourav (Surgical Gastroenterology). To minimize surgical trauma, the team opted for the minimally invasive thoracoscopic approach rather than conventional open chest surgery, which would have required a large skin incision. Dr. Gupta further said, "With the help of this technique, the denture was safely removed." The surgery also involved precise intraoperative guidance from Dr. Piyush Pathak, Gastroenterologist, who used endoscopy to help locate and monitor the denture's position during the procedure. Prof. Singh highlighted the significance of this achievement, saying, "This case exemplifies the advanced capabilities and teamwork at AIIMS Bhopal."

Man demands half of his late father's body

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In a bizarre incident in Tikamgarh district, a man demanded half of his deceased father's body following a dispute with his brother over the last rites, prompting police intervention. The incident occurred on Sunday in Lidhoralta village, approximately 45 km from the district headquarters. According to Arvind Singh Dangi, in-charge of Jatara police station, 84-year-old Dhyan Singh Ghosh, who resided with his younger son Deshraj, passed away after a prolonged illness. Upon receiving news of his father's death, the elder son, Kishan, who lived outside the village, returned home. A dispute arose between the brothers regarding who would perform the last rites. Deshraj asserted that it was his father's wish for him to conduct the cremation, while Kishan insisted on performing the rites himself. The argument escalated, with Kishan, reportedly under the influence of alcohol, demanding that their father's body be divided in half so both could perform separate cremations. Villagers alerted the police, who intervened to defuse the situation.

BJP MLA's brother shoots son dead over land dispute in Ujjain

PNS ■ UJJAIN

In a shocking incident, Mangal Malviya, the elder brother of BJP MLA Satish Malviya, shot and killed his son, Arvind Malviya (30), following a heated dispute over land and money. The tragic incident occurred on Monday morning around 9:30 AM in Makdawan. According to Additional SP Pallavi Shukla, the altercation broke out between Mangal Malviya and his son over ancestral property and earnings from a grocery shop. The argument quickly escalated, leading Mangal to open fire on Arvind using his licensed 12-bore gun. The first shot was fired on the ground floor, prompting Arvind to attempt to escape to the roof. However, Mangal chased him up the stairs and fired two more shots. One bullet struck Arvind in the head, while another hit his chest, killing him on the spot. Nagul Malviya and the brother of sitting BJP MLA Satish Malviya, who represents the Ghattia constituency. Following the incident, Mangal was taken into custody and is currently being interrogated by the police. The family dispute reportedly centered around approximate-

The altercation broke out between Mangal Malviya and his son over ancestral property and earnings from a grocery shop

ly seven bighas of land in Makdawan, along with ancestral property in Sunwani village, Dewas. Sources revealed that Mangal had recently received ₹10 lakh from the sale of his wife's share of land. Arvind had been demanding a portion of this amount, which led to ongoing tensions between father and son. Arvind, the elder of Mangal's two sons, was married and had a child. His sudden and violent death has sent shockwaves through the community, highlighting the devastating impact of unresolved family conflicts. The police have launched a detailed investigation into the case, examining all aspects of the dispute and the circumstances leading to the fatal shooting.

Bhopal CP felicitates Sewa Sadan Hospital officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Bhopal Traffic Police organized a Traffic Awareness Seminar and Felicitation Ceremony as part of the Road Safety Campaign today. During the event, five office bearers of Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital—Secretary Hero Gyanchandani, Managing Trustee A.C. Sadhwani, Director (Admin) Kushal Dharmani, Hospital Administrator Anusha Tiwari, and Camp Coordinator Nilesh Waghmare—were felicitated for their contributions to road safety initiatives. As part of the campaign, Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital conducted five free eye checkup and refraction error camps at various locations across Bhopal in January 2025. More than 1,300 drivers suffering from vision impairments and eye diseases received free eye examinations during these camps. Following the felicitation, the Traffic Police also organized an awareness seminar at Manas Bhawan, where various aspects of road safety and its importance were discussed. Bhopal Police



Commissioner Hari Narayan Chari Mishra, the chief guest of the seminar, urged citizens to strictly follow traffic rules. He highlighted that 9,000 school children and 5,000 college students actively participated in the awareness campaign. To further promote road safety, a bike rally and a painting competition were also conducted as part of the initiative. During the seminar, officials emphasized that a large percentage of road accident victims are under

35 years of age, underscoring the need for regular awareness campaigns beyond just one month. It was suggested that both law enforcement agencies and social organizations should continuously undertake road safety initiatives to reduce accidents and promote responsible driving behavior. The event was also attended by Additional Police Commissioners Awadhesh Goswami and Pankaj Srivastava, DCP Traffic Sanjay Singh, and social worker Dr. M.D. Bhagiani.

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Parliament: Opposition seeks accountability from Government on Maha Kumbh tragedy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Monday witnessed uproar from the treasury benches after Leader of Opposition (LoP) and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge paid tribute to 'thousands' who died in stampede in Maha Kumbh on January 29. Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar asked him to authenticate or retract the statement. Opposition MPs in the Lok Sabha also voiced strong concerns over the Kumbh Mela stampede, accusing the Government of negligence and insensitivity and calling for accountability. Kharge was quick to add that "this is my estimate (and) if this is not right you (the Government) should tell what is the truth". He said he was ready to be corrected. "I did not say 'thousands' to blame anyone. But how many people died, give that information at least. I will apologise if I am wrong. They should give figures how many died, how many are missing," he said. However, while participating in a debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address in Rajya Sabha, Kharge used the phrase "the thousands who died in Kumbh" to pay tributes to the deceased. "I pay my tributes to the people who died in Maha Kumbh... The thousands who died in



Delhi Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar conducts proceedings of the House as LoP Mallikarjun Kharge speaks during the Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi

Kumbh," he said, leading to the protest by the ruling members. Kharge, however, added this was his estimate and the government should provide the "correct" figures. "This is my estimate, if this is not right you should tell what is the truth... I am asking you to declare what the actual numbers are. If I am wrong I am ready to correct," he said. Dhankhar urged him to retract his statement. "The LoP has indicated a scenario using figures to the extent of thousands. I appeal to him, in this House, whatever is spoken, carries great weight. You have spoken something which has numbed everyone," Dhankhar said. "A message that goes from here, even if it is contradicted, goes to the whole world. Can you go to that extent? I would

appeal to you as one of senior most leaders of this country, if you put a figure in thousands I can only appeal to your conscience," he said. Meanwhile in Lok Sabha, Opposition MPs voiced strong concerns over the Kumbh Mela stampede, accusing the government of negligence and insensitivity and calling for accountability. Speaking during the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, DMK MP Kanimozhi expressed her condolences and criticised the government for its failure to ensure the safety of pilgrims. "I would like to express my grief and empathy to the people who lost their lives in the Kumbh Mela stampede. These people trusted the Union and state

governments, hoping they would be protected, but unfortunately, no one protected them," she said. The Lok Sabha on Monday witnessed prolonged noisy protests by opposition parties, demanding a discussion on the stampede in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj and a list of the deceased. She alleged that the Government's approach to governance has led to societal divisions. "When religion and politics merge, it is the innocent who suffer. We don't even know the exact number of people who died in the stampede," she remarked. Samajwadi Party MP Naresh Chandra Uttam Patel also lashed out at the Uttar Pradesh Government's handling of the Kumbh event. "The Kumbh Mela was not struck by a

natural disaster; it was a glaring example of the government's failure," he said. The SP MP questioned why the authorities had not anticipated the overwhelming number of attendees and why no list of the deceased had been released yet. "The double-engine government has made a mockery of governance. To date, we have no official count of those who lost their lives in the stampede," he said. Shifting focus to the broader state of affairs, Patel also criticised the government's handling of the education sector. Trinamool Congress MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar condemned the Government's response to the Kumbh tragedy, criticising the brevity of the President's mention of the incident. "Millions of Hindus were preparing for the Mahakumbh, and many poor people saved money for the Mauni Amavasya. It is sad to say that the President only spent 61 words on this tragedy. She has neither condemned the deaths nor sent condolence messages to the families of the deceased," she said. She further alleged discrepancies in the official death toll. "There is a clear discrepancy between the number of dead bodies in the morgue and the number of people reported missing. The same thing happened during Covid times," she added.

Delhi HC summons Shashi Tharoor in Rajeev Chandrasekhar defamation case



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday summoned Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on a defamation plea filed by BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar, seeking Rs. 10 crore for damaging the reputation. Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav posted the matter on April 28. "Let the plaint be registered as a suit. Issue summons to the defendant (Tharoor). List before the joint registrar



on April 28," said the court. In his suit, Chandrasekhar claimed Tharoor made false and defamatory statements at various public fora in April, 2024 that severely damaged his professional and personal reputation. Chandrasekhar has sought to restrain Tharoor from making any defamatory statements. While seeking a public apology, he sought Rs 10 crore in damages from Tharoor for allegedly defaming and tarnishing his reputation. The BJP leader

filed the defamation case over Tharoor's purported statements during an interview to a television channel where the latter allegedly said Chandrasekhar offered money to voters during 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The BJP politician is represented by law firm Karanjawala and company. In a tightly fought contest in Lok Sabha election from Thiruvananthapuram, Tharoor won by over 16,000 votes, against Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

Manipur violence: SC seeks forensic report on audio clips against CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Saying the State was "limping back to normalcy", the Supreme Court on Monday sought a sealed-cover forensic report on the authenticity of leaked audio clips alleging the role of Manipur Chief Minister Biren Singh in the ethnic violence. A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar sought the report from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) within six weeks and posted the plea by the Kuki Organisation for Human Rights Trust (KOHUR) on March 24. KOHUR, represented by advocate Prashant Bhushan,



sought a court-monitored SIT probe into the alleged role of the chief minister in the ethnic violence. Justice Sanjay Kumar, who was the Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court before being

elevated to the top court, said, "The chief minister of Manipur had hosted a dinner for me when I was elevated to this court, so if you have an issue with me hearing the matter then you can tell

me..." Bhushan said he did not have a problem at all. "The state is gradually limping back to normalcy and we will keep it (the matter) on hold at the moment," the CJI said. The bench would later see whether the top court or the high court should hear the case. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the State, was in agreement with the observations. Bhushan, however, termed the contents of the audio leaks a "very serious matter" and said in the clips the chief minister was purportedly saying that Meitei groups were allowed to loot arms and ammunition of the state government. "I have annexed

transcripts of tape recordings," he added. The Solicitor General said the petitioner had "ideological inclinations" and there was a report by the three high court judges' committee stating there were efforts to keep the "pot boiling." "A truth lab confirmed that 93 per cent it is the voice of the chief minister," said Bhushan, "and truth labs are far more reliable than the FSL reports." The law officer questioned the veracity of the report of the truth lab. On November 8, last year, a bench headed by former CJI D Y Chandrachud directed the Kuki organisation to produce material to indicate

authenticity of some leaked audio clips. Bhushan alleged the recorded conversation prima facie showed the complicity and the involvement of the state machinery in violence against the Kuki Zo community. He said the clips had "disturbing conversations" and the chief minister could be heard instigating the violence and protecting the attackers while fuelling the violence aside from allowing arms and ammunition to be looted. The Kuki organisation's plea alleged the chief minister of Manipur was instrumental in "inciting, organising and thereafter centrally orchestrating the large-scale

murder, destruction and other forms of violence against the Kuki dominated areas in Manipur". "Petitioner is praying for a court-monitored investigation by special investigation team into the leaked audio tape clips as there is clear and strong prima facie evidence showing involvement of highest functionary, i.e., chief minister of a state. The investigation would need to unearth the conspiracy which appears to involve the highest functionary of state," it added. The plea said the investigation couldn't be done by the CBI, ED, etc., and would have to be carried out by a special investigative

team of officers of impeccable integrity selected by the top court. Asked about the clip during a recent PTI interview, Chief Minister Singh said, "Some people are after me... There is a conspiracy. The matter is sub-judice. I won't talk much about it. An FIR has been filed." Over 200 people were killed and thousands rendered homeless after Meitei and Kuki communities clashed with each other in May last year. Bhushan alleged the recorded conversation prima facie showed the complicity and the involvement of the state machinery in violence against the Kuki Zo community.

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann urges Delhi voters to choose AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said people in Delhi will have to choose between education, development and women's upliftment on one side and "misconduct" on the other as they go out to vote on Wednesday. He led multiple roadshows on the last day of campaigning on Monday and encouraged people to vote for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on February 5 to sustain Delhi's development. Mann held roadshows in Adarsh Nagar and Shalimar Bagh to support AAP candidates Mukesh Goel and Bandana Kumari. "Today is the last day of the election campaign, and February 5 will be your last



day to decide which party to bring to power," said Mann. "On one side, there is a party that supports education, women's upliftment, and development; on the other

side, there is a party that engages in misconduct." "I don't know about 'Achhe Din' but the Aam Aadmi Party will surely bring honest and better days," Mann said referring to BJP's

widely known poll slogan that was first used during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. "If the AAP comes to power, every household in Delhi will be able to save at least Rs 20,000 to Rs 25,000 per month," he asserted referring to the party's 'Bachat Patra' -- savings made by people due to the AAP government's schemes. Mann further stated, "The Bharatiya Janata Party has a lot of money—they may come today, tonight, tomorrow, or the day after with money. He said if "they come to offer you money, take it and buy essentials with it" but press the "broom" button -- AAP's poll symbol -- to ensure AAP victory. Voting for Delhi Assembly election is scheduled for February 5 and results will be declared on February 8.

BJP leader Kiran Choudhry slams Opposition

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) leader Kiran Choudhry on Monday criticized Opposition parties, saying they are bereft of ideas and trying to build a false narrative against the Modi government, as the Rajya Sabha started a discussion on Motion of Thanks On The President's Address. Moving the motion in the Upper House, Choudhry said the Prime Minister has addressed all the important issues, which had been lying dormant for a long time because of policy paralysis and the indifferent attitude of the erstwhile Congress government. "And it is heartening to know that Modi has put Bharat on the centre stage of the world community," said the BJP MP



from Haryana. President Droupadi Murmu on Friday, the first day of the Budget Session, addressed both the Houses of Parliament assembled together in the Lok Sabha chamber and said the pace of work has tripled in the third term of her government, which has worked with strong determination to lift the economy out of the state of "policy paralysis".

Launching a scathing attack on the Opposition, Choudhry said they are running a false narrative and trying to paint a wrong picture of the Narendra Modi government. She said the Modi-led government has taken transformative steps to find holistic solutions to address all important issues. "The opposition parties, who are bereft of all agenda, are trying to paint this government as anti-farmer, patriarchal, misogynist, majoritarian and despotic. This false propaganda is born out of their desperation for their plummeting political fortunes," she said. Choudhry said the false narrative of Opposition has been rejected by the people and cited the resounding victories of the BJP in recently concluded assembly elections in Haryana and Maharashtra.

Gurugram Police arrest accused in model assault case at Dorsia club

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

A man was arrested on Monday for allegedly beating a 31-year-old man inside a club on January 28, police said. The victim was identified as Nikhil Sehrawat, originally from Mohan Garden in Uttam Nagar, Delhi, who was currently living in Anantraj Estate in Sector-63 Gurugram. It is being said that the victim was a model by profession. The accused was identified as Rohit, a resident of Gwal Pahari of Gurugram. According to the police, the victim filed a complaint on January 28 that he went to the Dorsia Club located on Gurugram-Faridabad Road on January 25 with his friends. The victim alleged that after having food he started dancing. Meanwhile, the bouncers pushed him on the instructions of the club owner. They started pulling him out and attacked him with sticks and weapons. The victim was later undergone nose surgery at a hospital in Delhi. On the complaint of the victim model, the police have registered a case and started an investigation. Based on his complaint a case was registered against the club owner and the bouncer at the DLF Phase-1 police station. Meanwhile, during interrogation, the accused disclosed that the victim had consumed excessive alcohol and got injured during the scuffle while being taken out of the club. "In connection with the matter, an accused has been arrested for assaulting the victim. The investigation team is scrutinizing the CCTV footage of the club to identify the remaining accused," Sandeep, spokesperson of the Gurugram police, said.

WHO warns of 85 per cent rise in cancer cases in south-east Asia by 2050

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The South-East Asia Region reported the highest number of cancers of lips and oral cavity, uterine cervix, and childhood cancers among all World Health Organisation regions in 2022, regional director of the WHO SEAR Saima Wazed said on Monday. She said it is estimated that by 2050, there will be 85 per cent increase in the number of new cancer cases and deaths in the region. Wazed, who is the regional director of World Health Organisation South East Asian Region (WHO-SEAR) called for joint efforts led by governments, supported by WHO and partners, and through collaboration that will make the region better equipped to tackle the rising cancer burden. Ahead of World Cancer Day



on February 4, she said, "On this year's World Cancer Day themed 'United by Unique', which is a reminder of the collective commitment against cancer, WHO acknowledges every patient's unique experiences and the value of people-centred care delivered

jointly by healthcare providers, families, friends and community". The WHO South-East Asia Region reported 2.4 million new cases of cancer in 2022, including 56,000 children, and 1.5 million deaths. "Among all the WHO regions, our region had the

highest number of cancers of lips and oral cavity, uterine cervix, and childhood cancers. It is estimated that by 2050, there will be 85 per cent increase in the number of new cases and deaths in the region," Wazed stated. In the last few years, she said

the countries in the region have made notable progress in cancer control. Six countries have dedicated national plans for cancer control, and two countries have included cancer as part of national NCD plan to strategically guide cancer prevention and control activities. Bhutan successfully completed the Health Flagship project in 2020, where more than 90 per cent of the target populations were screened for gastric, cervical, and breast cancer each, with screened positives being linked to diagnosis and treatment. The country is currently integrating the model into mainstream health services. Through the 'Cancer Anywhere' program, Thailand has adopted universal health coverage approach to cancer management. Eight

countries have introduced nationwide Human Papillomavirus vaccination. Global initiative for childhood cancer is being implemented in ten countries through a regional network of institutions, she said. Seven countries have operational population-based cancer registries. In ten countries, tertiary level cancer care is generally available, reaching 50 per cent or more patients in need, she said. The region has seen the fastest rate of decline in tobacco use which is a major risk factor for several high burden cancers. WHO has worked closely with all the member states supporting these efforts. "There are, however, persistent challenges," Wazed said pointing out that the response to cancer control is not uniform among countries.

"National cancer control programmes and plans are not fully aligned with evidence or best practices resulting in their ineffective implementation. Policies and guidance on control of cancer-causing agents prevalent in the region, such as areca nut, is lacking," she said. Existing cancer prevention policies and programmes are not fully implemented, leading to millions of avoidable cases. Cancer services are included in health benefit packages in only six countries, Wazed stated. "Screening for specific cancers is low. For example, cervical cancer screening has less than 50 per cent coverage in seven countries, which is much below the target of 70 per cent required for elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem," she said.

Third Amrit Snan draws millions in a spectacle of faith and devotion

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The third grand 'Amrit Snan' of the Maha Kumbh took place on the auspicious occasion of Basant Panchami, drawing millions of devotees from across the globe to the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati at Triveni Sangam. Pilgrims, sadhus, and kalpavasis gathered in massive numbers, seeking spiritual liberation through the holy dip, reinforcing the centuries-old faith that a bath in these holy waters cleanses one of past sins and paves the way for moksha (salvation). At the break of dawn, the ceremonial bathing processions began with the arrival of the revered Naga sadhus, their bodies smeared in ash, wielding tridents, and chanting sacred hymns. The akharas, following the time-honored tradition, led the way as thousands watched in reverence. By evening, around 2 crore devotees had performed the sacred ritual, raising the total number of bathers since January 13 to an estimated 35 crore, according to Information Director Shishir.

This staggering figure includes 10 lakh kalpavasis, who observe a month-long spiritual retreat, and 6.58 lakh general pilgrims. The significance of this year's Maha Kumbh is further heightened by the rare 'Triveni Yog,' a celestial alignment that occurs once in 144 years, believed by astrologers to magnify the spiritual potency of the event. For many devotees, this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. "This is not just a bath; it is a divine calling. The presence of Triveni Yog makes it all the more sacred," said Manoj Tripathi, a pilgrim from Varanasi. Another devotee, Kamala Devi from Rajasthan, expressed her joy: "I feel blessed to be here. I have waited my entire life for this moment. The energy is divine, and I feel spiritually uplifted." However, the spiritual fervor was accompanied by heightened security concerns following the tragic stampede during the previous 'Amrit Snan' on Mauni Amavasya, which resulted in at least 30 deaths and left 60 others injured. In response, the Uttar Pradesh government has significantly intensified security and



Naga Sadhus arrive to take a holy dip at the Sangam on the occasion of Basant Panchami in Prayagraj. PTI

protocols. Additional personnel, medical teams, and emergency response units were deployed to maintain order and facilitate a "zero-error" bathing experience. "After the unfortunate incident, we have doubled security personnel at key entry and exit points, ensuring a regulated flow of devotees. Our priority is to protect the faith and lives of all who come here," said a senior police official overseeing the arrangements. A devotee from Madhya Pradesh, Ravi Sharma, praised the government's efforts, saying, "The arrangements are much better this time. The administration has ensured smooth movement, and I felt safe throughout the process." As per tradition, the three main sects—Sanyasi, Bairagi, and Udaseen—performed their ceremonial dips in a predetermined sequence. Each akhara was allotted a 40-minute window at the confluence, with the first group completing their ritual and returning to their camps by 8:30 a.m. Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad head Ravindra Puri expressed his satisfaction with the

arrangements. "The administration has taken extensive measures to ensure a smooth and disciplined bathing experience. The Naga sadhus and all akharas are content with the coordination," he said. Another sadhu, Mahant Gopal Das, added, "This Kumbh is a reflection of our collective devotion. The discipline and faith of devotees inspire us all." Stretching across a 12-kilometer radius, the ghats of Sangam remained densely packed with devotees, many carrying traditional danda-kamandalu (wooden staff and water pot), while others walked with bundles on their heads and shoulder bags, chanting religious hymns. "The atmosphere is surreal, filled with devotion and purity. It is a blessing to be part of this divine congregation," said Sadhvi Ganga Bharti, a pilgrim from Haridwar. Another participant, Ramesh Yadav from Bihar, described his experience: "Taking a dip in the Sangam is a moment of complete surrender. I feel rejuvenated in mind and soul."

crowd management measures to ensure a safe and seamless event. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath personally inspected the arrangements on Saturday, directing officials to enforce strict safety



UP CM monitors Amrit Snan arrangements from war room

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath closely monitored the arrangements for the Amrit Snan on Basant Panchami, convening a high-level meeting in the war room at his official residence at 3:30 AM. Receiving real-time updates from Director General of Police (DGP), Principal Secretary (Home), and officials from the Chief Minister's Office, he issued key directives to ensure a smooth and secure event. Reviewing security and logistical preparations, the Chief Minister emphasized seamless arrangements,

instructing officials to ensure that devotees faced no inconvenience. He stressed the need for heightened security at the bathing ghats, directing authorities to implement strict safety protocols and finalize all essential arrangements. With lakhs of devotees participating in the sacred dip at Triveni Sangam, CM Yogi placed special focus on administrative preparedness, including crowd management and traffic control. His proactive monitoring underscored the government's commitment to ensuring a well-organized and spiritually enriching Amrit Snan at Maha Kumbh.

Agni Snan Sadhana of Vaishnav Akharas begins on Basant Panchami



BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Prayagraj Mahakumbh is witnessing the convergence of various spiritual resolutions and rigorous sadhanas. Among them, the Panch Dhuni Tapasya, also known as Agni Snan Sadhana, commenced with the Amrit Snan festival on Basant Panchami. Mahakumbh is a sacred land of chanting, penance, and sadhana, where ascetics can be seen deeply immersed in their spiritual practices in every corner. A unique and intense sadhana has begun in Tapasvi Nagar on the occasion of Basant Panchami, sparking great

curiosity among devotees. This sadhana, called Panch Dhuni Tapasya or Agni Snan Sadhana, is an extraordinary practice where the sadhak (ascetic) surrounds himself with multiple circles of fire and meditates at the center. The intensity of the flames, which can scorch human skin in an instant, is multiplied several times, making this a supreme test of endurance and spiritual discipline. There is a tradition of this Agni Snan sadhana in Khalsa of Vaishnav Akhara, which is done after reaching a state of extreme sacrifice and restraint. Mahant Raghav Das of Shri

Digambar Ani Akhara explains that this practice is a special sadhana of the All India Panch Terah Bhai Tyagi Khalsa of Digambar Ani Akhara, the principal Akhara of Vaishnav tradition. The sadhana follows a rigorous cycle lasting eighteen years, with practitioners enduring the extreme heat and flames for five months every year. This extended period of penance is not only a spiritual pursuit but also a test of endurance and ascetic capability. Upon successfully completing this arduous journey, the ascetic earns the revered title of Vairagi.



Floral showers enchant devotees on last Amrit Snan

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The final Amrit Snan of Maha Kumbh 2025 on Basant Panchami turned into a mesmerizing spectacle as crores of devotees at the Sangam were showered with rose petals from helicopters. Under the Yogi government's directive, the grand floral tribute elevated the spiritual fervor of the sacred bathing ritual on Monday. Starting at 6:30 AM, as Akharas began their ritualistic dip in the holy confluence, helicopters

released a continuous cascade of fresh rose petals over the ghats. Devotees, saints, and Naga Sadhus stood in awe as the petals descended upon them, chanting "Jai Shri Ram" and "Har Har Mahadev," creating a divine atmosphere. The Uttar Pradesh Horticulture Department, following the government's elaborate plans for Maha Kumbh's bathing festivals, ensured the availability of fresh rose petals for the occasion. A staggering 20 quintals of

petals were used for each bathing event, a tradition that has been maintained since Paus Purnima and the first Amrit Snan on Makar Sankranti. The floral tribute was also a highlight of the second Amrit Snan on Mauni Amavasya. The breathtaking aerial floral showers not only enhanced the spiritual grandeur of the event but also left devotees with an unforgettable experience, marking a fitting culmination to the sacred Amrit Snans of Maha Kumbh 2025.

Naga Sadhus steal spotlight at Triveni Sangam

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Naga Sadhus emerged as the center of attraction during the final Amrit Snan of Maha Kumbh 2025, mesmerizing thousands of devotees with their ancient traditions, martial arts, and spiritual fervor. Their disciplined rituals and striking presence on the banks of the Triveni Sangam created an atmosphere of awe and reverence. Leading the procession of Akharas in the sacred bathing ritual, the ascetics demonstrated their mastery of weaponry, expertly wielding spears, swords, and tridents. The rhythmic beats of the damru and the display of traditional combat techniques amplified the grandeur of the event, drawing both devotees and media alike. The Shobha



Yatra, organized for the Amrit Snan on Basant Panchami, was a spectacle to behold. Some Naga Sadhus rode majestically on horses, while others walked barefoot, adorned with

garlands, sacred ash, and matted hair decorated with flowers. Their fierce yet disciplined demeanor, guided by their Akhara leaders, highlighted their unwavering commitment to

asceticism. The energy of the Naga Sadhus was palpable as they performed martial arts, danced to the beats of drums, and engaged with onlookers. Many devotees

captured the electrifying moments on their mobile phones, while the Sadhus, in turn, welcomed them into their world of traditions. Some even added a touch of modernity by donning black sunglasses, blending their ancient customs with contemporary intrigue. As they took their ritual dip at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati, the Naga Sadhus maintained their distinct style—splashing water, laughing, and playfully interacting with one another. Their joyous participation enhanced the spiritual aura of the Maha Kumbh, reinforcing its significance as a grand confluence of faith, tradition, and nature. Alongside the male Naga Sadhus, a significant number of female Naga Sanyasis also participated in the sacred rituals. Dressed in

saffron, unstitched garments, these women have renounced worldly ties, undergoing rigorous spiritual discipline that includes performing Pind Daan for their ancestors and even for themselves—a symbolic gesture of complete detachment. Their presence sparked great curiosity among devotees eager to learn more about their ascetic way of life. Through their remarkable displays of devotion, discipline, and tradition, the Naga Sadhus reaffirmed that the Maha Kumbh is more than just a religious gathering—it is a profound celebration of spirituality, heritage, and the deep-rooted bond between humanity and the divine. Their mesmerizing presence at Maha Kumbh 2025 ensures that this event will be etched in the memories of devotees for years to come.

King of Bhutan set to visit Mahakumbh on Tuesday



BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

King of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, arrived in Lucknow on Monday. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath warmly welcomed the King at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport. The Chief Minister presented a bouquet to the King and inquired about his well-being. In return, the King of Bhutan

extended his greetings to CM Yogi Adityanath. In keeping with Indian tradition, artists welcomed the King with various cultural performances at the airport. Wangchuck acknowledged their efforts and encouraged the artists. On Tuesday, the King of Bhutan is set to visit Prayagraj Mahakumbh, where he will take a holy bath at the Triveni Sangam and perform darshan and Pujan at the sacred site.

Ayodhya sets record as over one Crore devotees visit since January 26

KAMLESH SRIVASTAVA ■ AYODHYA

Ayodhya has set a new record with over one crore devotees visiting the holy city between January 26 and Basant Panchami (February 3). Amid vigilant administrative arrangements, devotees arriving in Ayodhya are filled with joy and devotion, chanting slogans in praise of Modi, Yogi, and Lord Shri Ram. On Basant Panchami, lakhs of devotees performed sacred baths and offered prayers, further enriching the spiritual

atmosphere. For the first time since Ramlala was enthroned in the grand temple, Mahakumbh is being held in Prayagraj, drawing an influx of pilgrims to Ayodhya as well. Anticipating this, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had deployed a dedicated team of officials to oversee the arrangements and ensure a seamless experience for devotees. Following a public meeting in Milkipur on February 2, he reinforced instructions to officials, emphasizing that no devotee should face any



difficulty. The sacred bathing ritual on Basant Panchami began at dawn and continued until the afternoon, accompanied by acts of charity and devotion. Devotees then proceeded to mathas and temples for darshan, with queues stretching till late evening at Ram Temple and Hanuman Garhi. The Ram Temple remains the spiritual epicenter of Ayodhya, attracting around three lakh devotees daily. The temple trust has made elaborate arrangements to facilitate darshan, keeping the temple

open for 18 hours a day. Hanuman Garhi continues to witness a steady stream of devotees, reinforcing Ayodhya's deep-rooted spiritual significance. The mathas and temples of Ayodhya witnessed vibrant celebrations on Basant Panchami, as sadhus and saints joyfully played with colors, marking the festive spirit. As part of the rituals, abir and gulal were also applied to the deity seated in the sanctum sanctorum. Ramlala, was adorned in new yellow garments, symbolizing the arrival of spring. According to

the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirtha Kshetra Trust, gulal was applied to Ramlala, and priests exchanged it as prasad, enhancing the spiritual atmosphere. A variety of offerings, including kheer, puri, dry fruits, and fruits, were presented as part of the sacred rituals. While Prayagraj offers vast spaces for ritual baths, Ayodhya's focus remains on Ramlala, drawing massive crowds to a concentrated area. Managing such a large gathering was a significant challenge, but effective administrative planning and

strategy ensured smooth coordination. IG Praveen Kumar highlighted key measures implemented for crowd management, including road diversions, designated parking areas, and a substantial police deployment to maintain order. Entry to the fairgrounds was regulated based on safety protocols, ensuring a hassle-free experience for devotees. Divisional Commissioner Gaurav Dayal affirmed that officers are monitoring the fair zone 24/7, with arrangements in place to accommodate 25,000 to 30,000 people.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Quest for clean energy

With a strong financial backing, the country is poised to make nuclear power a cornerstone of its energy mix

As India continues its journey toward energy transition and sustainability, the role of nuclear power has become increasingly vital. The Union Budget 2025-26, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, earmarked Rs 20,000 crore for the Nuclear Energy Mission, aiming to significantly enhance India's nuclear energy capacity. This ambitious initiative is set to propel India towards achieving at least 100 GW of nuclear energy capacity by 2047, a significant leap from the current 8 GW. Presently, nuclear energy constitutes less than 2 per cent of India's total energy mix. With an installed capacity of 8 GW, India's nuclear sector lags behind other energy sources, such as coal, solar and wind. The Modi government is prioritising nuclear power as a stable and clean energy source. The July 2024 Budget had already set the stage for nuclear expansion by highlighting the need to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1962 to allow private sector participation in nuclear power generation. The 2025-26 Budget builds upon this foundation by reinforcing the push for small modular reactors (SMRs). India's ambitious renewable energy targets include achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030. While solar and wind energy play a crucial role in this mix, they are subject to weather conditions and require large-scale energy storage solutions. Nuclear energy, on the other hand, provides continuous, low-carbon power without the intermittency issues of renewables. SMRs, with a capacity of up to 300 MW, offer distinct advantages over conventional nuclear reactors. Their modular design allows for quicker assembly, reduced costs and enhanced safety features. By promoting indigenously developed SMRs, India aims to increase its self-reliance in nuclear technology and reduce dependency on foreign nations. The allocation of Rs 20,000 crore under the Nuclear Energy Mission signals a clear intent to boost nuclear power generation. This funding will support research and development in indigenous nuclear technologies, particularly SMRs. Infrastructure development will be a key focus, with plans to set up at least five SMRs by 2033 as part of a long-term nuclear expansion plan. Despite its benefits, nuclear energy in India faces several challenges. Regulatory barriers exist due to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, which currently limit private sector involvement and require amendments. Public concerns on safety remain a significant issue, as nuclear accidents worldwide have created scepticism, necessitating stringent safety protocols. Technological monopolies present another challenge, as nuclear technology is concentrated among a few global players, making domestic capacity-building initiatives essential. But a push for nuclear energy is the need of the hours. It will reduce country's carbon footprint, enhance energy security, and meet its growing electricity demands sustainably.



SMRs, with a capacity of up to 300 MW, offer distinct advantages over conventional nuclear reactors. Their modular design allows for quicker assembly, reduced costs and enhanced safety features. By promoting indigenously developed SMRs, India aims to increase its self-reliance in nuclear technology and reduce dependency on foreign nations. The allocation of Rs 20,000 crore under the Nuclear Energy Mission signals a clear intent to boost nuclear power generation. This funding will support research and development in indigenous nuclear technologies, particularly SMRs. Infrastructure development will be a key focus, with plans to set up at least five SMRs by 2033 as part of a long-term nuclear expansion plan. Despite its benefits, nuclear energy in India faces several challenges. Regulatory barriers exist due to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, which currently limit private sector involvement and require amendments. Public concerns on safety remain a significant issue, as nuclear accidents worldwide have created scepticism, necessitating stringent safety protocols. Technological monopolies present another challenge, as nuclear technology is concentrated among a few global players, making domestic capacity-building initiatives essential. But a push for nuclear energy is the need of the hours. It will reduce country's carbon footprint, enhance energy security, and meet its growing electricity demands sustainably.

PICTALK



People fly kites at the annual Basant Panchmi festival in Amritsar

Budget 2025: A game changer for MSMEs and startups

With focus on financial accessibility, technology and market linkages, the budget will strengthen India's startup ecosystem and boost employment



MANISH SINGHAL

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of India's economic structure, contributing nearly 30 per cent to GDP, 45 per cent to our exports and generating employment for over 200 millions. The budget for 2025-26 holds much promise for the 5.7 crore MSMEs in India. As India chases its 'Viksit Bharat' dream, Agriculture, the MSME sector, Investment and Exports have been identified as the key engines for driving growth. MSMEs account for about 27 per cent of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), positioning themselves as the backbone of economic activity and growth.

Ranging from small-scale artisans and local service providers to growing businesses across rural and urban India, MSMEs are diverse and significantly contribute to industrial output and innovation in India. In line with the government's recognition of MSMEs as the 'second engine' of economic expansion, the 2025-26 Budget introduces key reforms to enhance financial accessibility, technological adoption, and market linkages. A notable step was the enhancement of the credit guarantee cover for MSMEs from Rs 5 crores to Rs 10 crores, leading to additional credit of Rs 1.5 lakh crore over the next 5 years. By enhancing the investment and turnover limits, the 20.09 million registered MSMEs (19.4 million micro-enterprises, 5,54,000 small enterprises and 52,000 medium enterprises) now have greater and easier access to capital for technological upgradation and to build efficiencies. Traditionally, MSMEs have battled limited access to affordable and timely credit, inadequate infrastructure, and complex regulations. The increased guarantee cover addresses one of the major pain points for MSMEs and start-ups while the budget's continued emphasis on skilling promises an ongoing supply of skilled labour. As of January 2025, India has over 159,000 recognised startups, securing its place as the



world's third-largest startup ecosystem. The special funding options for start-ups and first-time entrepreneurs in the budget are likely to encourage more individuals to start businesses, innovate and generate employment. In this regard, to additional Rs 10,000 crore Fund of Funds Scheme (FFS) and the proposed Deep Tech Fund will provide crucial capital for startups, particularly in AI, Climate Tech, and Agri Tech. Enhanced MSME support and policies will improve the ease of doing business and further accelerate growth for future entrepreneurs. The new simplified taxation and regulatory framework will attract private capital, which in turn will further accelerate growth. Many MSMEs are labour-intensive. Key industries like leather, and textiles are major employment generators. The focus on improving productivity and quality of the leather industry goods through Government schemes that support design, machinery etc will positively impact the sector's export potential and generate employment too. With the Government's aim to make India a global hub for toys, MSMEs can consider setting up units in identified clusters to create an ecosystem that manufactures world-class toys while pro-



THE DIRECT TAX BENEFITS PROVIDED IN THE BUDGET WILL BOLSTER CONSUMPTION-LED DEMAND THROUGH ENHANCED DISPOSABLE INCOMES IN THE HANDS OF TAXPAYERS. THIS WILL FURTHER GIVE IMPETUS TO MSME PRODUCTION AND ENHANCE THEIR OVERALL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

moting Indian toy makers, who can perhaps use the infrastructure in these clusters to explore overseas markets. Food processing is another sector that has received attention in the budget and which can make the MSME sector in our country more robust. It gives our farmers an opportunity to sell their produce, gives businesses an opportunity to add value and also generates employment in the north-east region which needs more economic opportunities. The direct tax benefits provided in the Budget will bolster consumption-led demand through enhanced disposable incomes in the hands of taxpayers. This will further give impetus to MSME production and enhance their overall growth and development. Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy and has rightfully received attention in the budget. Most of our farmers hold small and medium land areas and come under the MSME category. By focusing on 100 districts with low productivity, moderate crop intensity and below-average credit parameters, the farming output will get a boost. Missions promoting pulse cultivation, and fruit and vegetable cultivation are bound to improve agricultural practices, infrastructure,

employment opportunities, access to credit and promote the food processing industry. It will also help develop the backward areas of rural India and curtail urban migration significantly. The substantial increase in credit through Kisan credit cards is also commendable. India's traditional textiles have received a lift with the mission to improve cotton production using sustainable practices and technological support. Not just cotton farmers, but the Indian textile industry has a chance to reclaim its past glory, especially with the political upheaval in neighbouring Bangladesh pushing textile units there into a tailspin. The proposal to transform India Post into a large supply chain across rural India will link up rural artisans to entrepreneurs and markets. While these measures could significantly enhance the growth trajectory of MSMEs and startups, solidifying their role as key drivers of the Indian economy, the need for simpler cross-border payments to enable seamless global trade and include service exports under interest equalisation schemes could further reduce operational hurdles and encourage more units to be set up. (The writer is Secretary General, ASSOCHAM, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AMERICA RAISES TARIFFS

Madam—The United States has decided to increase tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China. This step can be considered significant in enhancing America's self-reliance and strengthening domestic industries. From the American perspective, this policy aims to boost their economy, increase domestic employment opportunities, and reduce the trade deficit. It will lead to a higher demand for local products in the US, thereby strengthening its production capacity.

For India, this situation could open new opportunities. The additional 10 per cent tariff on China may benefit Indian exporters, as it could make Indian products more competitive in the US market. Sectors such as textiles, IT and automobiles are particularly likely to experience growth in exports. Moreover, this decision could also support India's 'Make in India' initiative. If India strengthens its manufacturing capabilities, it could become a better alternative to China for the US. This situation has the potential to further deepen India-US trade relations. Thus, while this policy might pose challenges for some countries, it could create new opportunities for developing nations like India. If India aligns its production and export strategies effectively, it can emerge as a key player in global trade.

R K Jain | Barwani

TAX RELIEF FOR MIDDLE CLASS

Madam—This year's Union Budget of FY 2025-26 is one of the most special ones among every such Union Budget being presented in Modi's prime ministerial term. One of the welcoming aspects of the budget is its substantial focus on the middle class section of society. So far, in the last decade, the Budget's so on the table were serving the two extremes of the society, either the poor class or the rich class. In an attempt to please these extreme sections of society, the government often misses the opportunity to cater to the aspirations of the larger line of society formed by the middle class. The cherry on the cake for the

Women U-19 win T20 World Cup



India beat South Africa by nine wickets in the 2025 U-19 T20 World Cup final at the Bayuemas Oval in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur. Champions India won all their group-stage matches against West Indies, Malaysia and Sri Lanka before getting the better of Bangladesh and Scotland in the Super Six. In the semifinal, they defeated England to make it six wins on the bounce. Meanwhile, South Africa topped Group C with wins over New Zealand, Samoa, and Nigeria.

In the Super Six round, South Africa defeated Ireland but had to share points with the USA after the game was abandoned due to rain. In the semifinal, they defeated Australia by five wickets to seal their spot in the final. In the final, India defeated South Africa by nine wickets to win the coveted trophy. **Jayanthi S Maniam | Mumbai**

middle class people is the increase in the personal income tax slab from erstwhile 7 to 12 lakhs. Just like the government tries every possible attempt to lure the state of Bihar with multiple announcements, similarly, the government's focus on the middle class is welcoming. The nutritional scheme-like revamping of the poshan abhiyaan, the establishment of five centres of excellence for skilling, Saksham Anganwadi, the National Manufacturing Mission, and so on are among the welcoming initiatives from the side of the government. We hope that the middle-class section of society will happily enjoy the upcoming year with quality improvement on their wellbeing and attentive focus. Hopefully the middle class businessmen as well as the salary class will gain from the welcoming developments announced in the budget 2025-26. **Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur**

SONIA GANDHI DRAWS FLAK

Madam—Apropos of the headlines (February 1) 'Rashtrapati Bhavan Slams the Congress' and PM Modi's scathing attack

on Congress, Sonia Gandhi's unsavoury comments on President Draupadi Murmu have been widely criticised in public. The slangs like 'boring', 'tired', and 'poor lady' demean the supreme constitutional authority and supreme commander of armed forces. In the presidential elections, Congress had opposed President Murmu. Embroiling the president in a political wrangle must be condemned. Congress is setting new records of low politics. The ruckus the Congress party created on Hindenburg reports in the Parliament, media, and demonstrations met the inevitable tragic end when the Hindenburg Research wound up its operations. Nothing could be proved, but of course, it misled the people. Congress has not spared any constitutional authority from the Election Commission, CAG, Supreme Court and now the President herself. Congress has finally written its script of losing credibility as a political party. **Vinod Johri | Delhi**

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

The human touch in AI: Why we anthropomorphise machines

As AI continues to evolve, it is crucial to maintain clear boundaries between machine intelligence and human cognition



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

In an era increasingly defined by artificial intelligence (AI), a curious psychological phenomenon has emerged—humans are anthropomorphising AI tools. From virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa to large language models like ChatGPT, people often ascribe human-like emotions, intentions and even personalities to these systems. While this tendency may seem benign or even endearing, it has profound implications for society, ethics, and the way we perceive technology. By giving AI tools human-like names, voices and personalities, developers create a sense of familiarity and comfort. For instance, when Alexa responds with a cheerful "Hello!" or when ChatGPT uses conversational language to explain complex topics, users are more likely to feel at ease. This human-like interaction fosters trust, making people more willing to rely on AI for tasks ranging from scheduling appointments to providing emotional support. A lot of evidence points to psychological causes for this behaviour. As a species, we have an innate propensity to



attribute human characteristics to things that do not exist. Even inanimate things, like animals and objects, can have feelings and purposes. The advent of AI has amplified this tendency to an unprecedented degree by creating tools that can engage in decision-making, interactive communication and natural language processing in ways that are reminiscent of humans. Incorporating human-like characteristics into AI systems takes advantage of this natural propensity, making them appear more relatable and trustworthy. While the benefits of anthropomorphising AI are evident, the practice is not without its pitfalls. When AI tools are designed to mimic human behaviour too closely, users may forget they are interact-

ing with a machine. This blurring of lines can lead to over-reliance, misplaced trust, and even exploitation. For instance, a user might confide deeply personal information to a chatbot, unaware that their data could be stored, analysed, or misused. Deploying AI tools in delicate situations raises even more serious ethical concerns. Take into account the application of AI in counselling and treatment. Although a chatbot designed to mimic human behaviour can offer some assistance, it can't replace a human expert when it comes to empathy and moral reasoning. Users' potential misunderstanding of AI as a substitute for human therapists highlights the importance of openness and limits. The ethical ramifications of anthropomorphisation need to be considered by regulators and lawmakers as AI becomes more integrated into everyday life. AI tools do not yet possess awareness, emotions, or free will; thus, companies must be forthright in informing consumers of these limits. Another important point is

that AI could be used in a deceptive way. Companies and governments might use human-like AI to make convincing and emotionally engaging connections. AI chatbots used for customer service or political campaigns might quietly sway people's views and choices, which raises concerns about ethics and whether users agree to this influence. While AI can enhance productivity, creativity, and convenience, it is essential to maintain a clear distinction between human intelligence and machine intelligence. Designers should focus on developing efficient and useful AI without encouraging unrealistic emotional attachments. Additionally, individuals should cultivate a healthy scepticism toward AI interactions, recognising the sophisticated abilities yet realising that they are fundamentally non-human. The moment humans forget social interactions and machines start social interactions, it's the end of humanity. (The writer is the Dean-Academic Affairs, at Garden City University; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

A PARENTING GUIDE FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

This new era of parenting demands a thoughtful, proactive approach to raising future-ready generations



SHAINY SHARMA

The 21st century has introduced new challenges and opportunities in parenting. As we raise Generation Alpha (born 2012-2024) and Generation Beta (born 2025-2039), it is crucial to adapt parenting strategies to their digital upbringing, rapid technological advancements and changing societal norms. Ensuring these children grow up healthy, happy and disciplined requires a balance of traditional values and modern approaches.

There is no denying that, unlike previous generations, Generation Alpha and Generation Beta are growing up with easy access to technology, which affects their lifestyle habits. It is of utmost importance that parents/guardians take proactive steps to ensure their children's wellbeing such as providing balanced nutrition such as a diet rich in proteins, vitamins and fibres while limiting processed foods and sugary snacks; reducing screen time and promoting physical activities such as cycling, swimming and team sports to improve fitness and social skills; setting screen-free bedtime routines to ensure quality sleep, which is crucial for the cognitive and emotional development and encouraging children to spend time offline by engaging in hands-on activities like painting, gardening and DIY projects.

Not only these, but in an era of social media influence and fast-paced lifestyles, parents/guardians need to support their children by creating a strong emotional connection; encouraging resilience and a growth mindset; guiding them in reducing digital overload, and engaging them in mindful activities such as yoga, meditation, journaling, or simple relaxation exercises to help them cope with



stress. Above all, what matters the most is the art of discipline. With instant gratification becoming a norm in the digital age, parents/guardians must realise that these generations will grow up in an AI-driven world, requiring skills beyond academics. Parents/Guardians can help prepare them by encouraging critical thinking and creativity and providing problem-solving challenges, STEM activities and artistic outlets.

They can also provide proper guidance on responsible internet usage, cybersecurity and online ethics, followed by developing social skills in a hybrid world. Raising healthy, happy and disciplined Gen Alpha and Gen Beta children requires a thoughtful blend of love, guidance, and adaptability. Parents/Guardians must embrace new-age parenting by integrating digital awareness with traditional values while fostering emotional resilience and self-discipline.

By prioritising wellbeing, education and strong moral foundations, one can ensure these generations grow into responsible, fulfilled, and future-ready individuals. Also, by providing proper nutrition, encouraging physical and mental wellbeing, fostering social skills, and setting positive examples, parents/guardians can create an environment where children thrive. It is aptly said that a happy and healthy child is not just the result of luck but of consistent efforts, care and understanding from those who nurture them.

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

The colours of identity: Unraveling the layers of race, bias and belonging

Among the many facets of identity, skin colour remains one of the most prominent yet divisive markers of difference

Variety. A singular word that carries depth, stretching across every horizon within our periphery. Everything, whether tangible or intangible, holds a streak of diversity, existing in more than just one form. The human race is the finest testament to this theory, embodying an expansive fluctuation of diversity in ways unparalleled. No two humans are exactly the same, no matter the similarity. From the obvious—gender, ethnicity, nationality—to the microscopic strands of DNA, variety defines existence.

Among the many dimensions of human diversity, skin color stands as one of the most visible yet most divisive. The spectrum of human skin spans hues of black, brown, white, and even shades of yellow,



ALINA HUSSAIN

forming a palette that should symbolise coexistence. However, rather than being embraced as a natural manifestation of diversity, this spectrum has historically been distorted into a hierarchy. The darker shades, unfairly positioned at the bottom, contrast starkly with the privileges afforded to the lighter tones at the top. This stratification of color has shaped life experi-

ences, often determining opportunities, treatment, and social perceptions. India, with its rich cultural and genetic diversity, encapsulates nearly the entire range of this scale. To the global eye, Indians and their South Asian neighbours fall in the middle—brown. This stain of brownness seeps beyond national borders, appearing across continents where South Asians have migrated and settled. However, unlike colors on a painter's palette, which blend to create new shades, human societies tend to resist seamless integration. Instead, racial identities remain dissonant, sometimes even immiscible. The concept of being "white-washed" is one such manifestation of this resistance—an observation aimed at those who adopt

Western customs, implying a dilution of their native culture under the influence of whiteness. South Asians, however, have long held a deep connection to their cultural roots. Even in foreign lands, communities of brown-skinned individuals tend to cluster together, finding comfort and belonging among their own. This natural act of unity transcends national identities, allowing individuals from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka to identify simply as brown in predominantly white societies. Migration dissolves political boundaries, fostering a sense of kinship rooted in shared experiences rather than nationality. The primary reason for South Asian migration to the West



has historically been the pursuit of a better livelihood. The roots of this movement can be traced back to 19th-century colonisation, where white Europeans established themselves as the superior race while relegating the browns and blacks to a lower status. This racial hierarchy was not only imposed but deeply internalised, embedding itself into the psyche of societies across generations. The consequences of this structured superiority

continue to persist, subtly influencing perceptions and opportunities to this day. Though the era of overt, institutionalised racial discrimination has passed, its remnants linger. Silent racism manifests in subtle yet persistent ways—being followed in a store, being presumed guilty before proven innocent, or being typecast into stereotypes like "smelly" or "uncivilised." The unspoken biases that people of color endure may be so ingrained in social interactions that they sometimes question whether their experiences of discrimination are real or imagined. But just because racism has grown quieter does not mean it has disappeared. At times, however, this silence gives way to overt expressions of prejudice. The question

then arises: can racism be unlearned? Can deep-seated biases, cultivated over centuries, be eradicated? Some argue that racism is built on a foundation of illusion—a false construct designed to uphold power structures rather than any scientific or logical basis. Commerce, globalisation and education might pave the way toward dismantling these biases, but the journey is long and uncertain. Yet racism is not a one-way street. Just as people of color face discrimination in white-majority societies, white individuals experience racism in South Asian countries as well. Whether rooted in resentment from the colonial past, an ingrained inferiority complex, or sheer ignorance, racism in India and other parts of the

region is equally loud and apparent. This internal bias is a lingering vestige of colonial influence, stubborn and deeply embedded in the collective consciousness. Ultimately, our skin color is an inescapable part of our identity. But as history has shown, social constructs evolve. Just as oppression once seemed an immutable reality but has gradually been challenged and deconstructed, so too can racial prejudices fade with time. While the road to a world free of color-based biases is long, there remains a glimmer of hope—a strip of rainbow amidst the storm, promising a better, more inclusive tomorrow.

(The writer is a law student and a freelance writer; views are personal)

The impact of tariffs: Global shifts and the US dilemma



ATUL SEHGAL

From China's rapid economic ascent to the stagnation facing developed nations, trade tariffs have profound effects, influencing international trade



The present world is witnessing a situation of several impending tariffs on international trade. Tariffs in international trade are an instrument to reduce imports from specific countries and to promote indigenous production of goods and services. Countries grow rich by producing and selling value-added goods and services. The buyers of these goods and services can be within the country or outside. Obviously, more buyers are outside than inside and for this reason, exports hold the prime key to countries' enrichment.

The newly installed government in the USA is proposing to impose trade tariffs on several countries ostensibly to reduce the burden of taxes on the domestic population and promote indigenous manufacturing of goods. For any country, it is the balance of trade i.e. the excess of exports over imports that determines its buying capacity in the international market as well the strength of its monetary currency vis-a-vis the international ruling currency US Dollar. This is true of every country except the USA because its currency is not pegged to gold whereas other currencies are. For this reason, we see how post World War 2 (1939-1945), Japan and Germany developed fast a big indigenous manufacturing capability based on modern technologies and through extensive exports of valued added industrial goods like machinery, automobiles and other technological products.

The currencies of these countries gradually strengthened and a stage was reached when their products became price uncompetitive in exports. For example, the Japanese Yen which was equivalent to approximately 0.01 USD in the year 1994 is now traded for USD 0.0064 in 2025. This was true of most of the developed countries at that time (1990 to 2000). The result was that diminishing price competitiveness in exports led to an industrial and economic decline. This led to the consti-



THE CASE OF THE USA IS TYPICAL AND DIFFERENT. IT HAS BEEN EXPORTING HIGH-TECHNOLOGY GOODS AND LIBERALLY IMPORTING LOW-END CONSUMER GOODS FOR A LONG PERIOD

tution of WTO and GATT through which this stagnation hit the economies of the developed countries that sought a revival of high trade and growth. However, the advent of China and its rapid rise on the world economic horizon changed the scenario dramatically and rather unexpectedly. The controlled tariff regime and its regulation under the GATT were greatly leveraged by China through a unique model of economic growth based on high borrowing, mega-scale production and export focus.

While all the above was going on, even the Chinese economic model began to falter because it was unsustainable, being heavily debt and export-dependent. The stagnating economies of Europe and many other countries sought to revive growth through tariffs. Tariffs are basically import duties enabling higher costs of landed goods imported from specific countries. The agreed tariffs under GATT helped the developed countries to grow, albeit to a small degree because of the limitations imposed by demographic factors and technological obsolescence, besides the economic blizzard unleashed by China.

The result of the above developments was that in the last 5-10 years, countries have become increasingly protective and insular in their trade practices and have started putting tariff barriers to protect and bolster their domestic industries.

The case of the USA is typical and different. It has been exporting high-technology goods and liberally importing low-end consumer goods for a long period. But high technology goods including arms and ammunitions export could not keep pace with its requirements due to ever-changing secu-

rity scenarios, absorption or development of high technology in countries like India, Brazil and South Africa. This has led to the debt of the USA touching an astronomically high figure of 33 trillion USD. This is long-term unsustainable. With the growth of domestic technologies and production facilities in the erstwhile third-world countries, of which India is a prime example, export prospects of US-made products have fallen considerably.

This is also due to the emergence of Chinese multinational companies which are giving a serious challenge to the existing MNCs in Europe and the USA. But the tariff war by the USA on specific countries of the world is not going to be a panacea for its impending economic ills. Its population will have to be made more productive.

With a very high cost of production due to the high cost of services and labour, the US economy is presently not in a favourable position to compete for international exports of lower-end consumer goods in general. Even for high technology goods like warfare and space technology products, it cannot today compete with emerging industrial economies like China and India. What is happening to the USA is quite opposite to what happened to Japan and Germany in the late nineties and thereafter.

The continuing strengthening of the USD is due to the flight of the dollar from various countries to the USA by the operations of FIs and FII. Excess of money supply in the US economy will lead to runaway inflation which will further impact adversely its middle and lower class population. The imposition of high tariffs on imported goods will have the same effect.

If the USA chooses to abolish income tax alongside import tariff increase, it could very well end up with huge domestic fiscal deficits which will have to be met by debt or currency printing. Thus what the present US government contemplates could well land it into an economic inflationary spiral.

This situation will be exactly a more intense version of what the government desires to remedy presently. It could be almost something like falling from the frying pan into the fire.

The possibility of all this happening becomes pronounced because of the coming together of BRICS nations and the usage of parallel currencies for international trade. Also, the fact that many countries could well retaliate with counter-tariffs on the USA after the US imposed tariffs strengthens further the above possibility.

Given this, the best course of action for the US would be to link once again its currency with gold — a process of reversal of what was done in 1971. This will lend stability and sustainability to the US economy and also to the global economy. In general, the matter of trade tariffs is best left to individual countries, looking at their resources and economic circumstances.

Global countries have always been historically interdependent because of their specific areas of strengths and weaknesses in resources. The naturally existing areas of resource abundance and deficiency will remain. However social and political factors are dynamic and will always impinge on policy pronouncements. The prudent and perseverant will win even in this arena.

(The author is a management consultant based in New Delhi; views are personal)

Trump plans to cut US funding to South Africa over land law

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

US President Donald Trump has said he will cut all funding to South Africa and has launched an investigation into the country's policies, claiming a "massive" human rights violation is happening over a new land expropriation law.



Trump made the pledge to stop all future funding on his Truth Social platform on Sunday, writing: "South Africa is confiscating land, and treating certain classes of people VERY BADLY." In South Africa, Trump wrote, a "massive Human Rights VIOLATION, at a minimum, is happening for all to see. The United States won't stand for it, we will act. Also, I will be cutting off all future funding to South Africa until a full investigation of this situation has been completed!"

Africa and has also targeted Ramaphosa's government, accusing it of being anti-white and claiming in 2023 it was allowing a "genocide" against white farmers. Experts in South Africa say that while there are cases of white farmers being killed, it is rather a reflection of the country's desperately high levels of violent crime across the board, which are some of the worst in the world. In comments to reporters, Trump said Sunday "they're taking away land, they're confiscating land and actually they're doing things that are perhaps far worse than that." Trump didn't say exactly which policy he was referring to, or which people were being mistreated. But his comments appeared to be in reaction to the new land law South Africa passed last month that gives the government scope to acquire land from private parties if it is in the public interest. The law has been debated and considered for years and has

been criticized by some interest groups in South Africa as opening the way to seize land from some of the country's white minority. However, the government says people's rights are still protected and land can only be taken in specific circumstances where it is not being used productively and it's in the public interest that the land is redistributed. The office of Ramaphosa released a statement Monday, saying: "The recently adopted Expropriation Act is not a confiscation instrument, but a constitutionally mandated legal process that ensures public access to land in an equitable and just manner as guided by the constitution. "South Africa, like the United States of America and other countries, has always had expropriation laws that balance the need for public usage of land and the protection of rights of property owners." South African Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola said Trump's

administration should use the investigation it says it is launching "to deepen their understanding of South Africa's policies as a constitutional democracy. Such insights will ensure a respectful and informed approach to our democratic commitments." South Africa is a major beneficiary of US funding under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, which contributes around \$400 million a year to the country's HIV/AIDS program. That funding was already under threat after Trump's freeze on foreign aid across the world. Trump has been critical of South Africa in the past. Ramaphosa's office said there is "no other significant funding that is provided by the United States in South Africa," although South Africa is America's largest trading partner in Africa by some way, according to the US International Trade Commission. Trump has previously been critical of South Africa's government, writing in a social media post during his first term in 2018 that land was being seized from white farms and there was "large scale killing of farmers." Trump said in the same message — which was roundly criticized in South Africa as making false claims — that he was ordering then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to investigate. There are an average of around 70 homicides a day in South Africa, according to official crime statistics, and the vast majority of victims are Black.

China reiterates threat to retaliate against US tariffs

PTI ■ TAIPEI (TAIWAN)

US President Donald Trump's trade war with Canada, Mexico and China is ramping up over the production and importation of the opiate fentanyl, along with trade surpluses and illegal border crossings by migrants from across the globe. Here is what Beijing says about it:



What has been China's reaction so far? China has reiterated its threat to take "necessary countermeasures to defend its legitimate rights and interests" following Trump's decision to impose 10 per cent tariffs on China for allegedly doing too little to stem the production of precursor chemicals for fentanyl. The Foreign Ministry statement issued Sunday did not mention any specific retaliatory measures, but said "China calls on the United States to correct its wrongdoings, maintain the hard-won positive dynamics in the counter-narcotics cooperation, and promote a steady, sound and sustainable development of China-US relationship." China says the US action violates World Trade Organisation rules and has vowed to bring a case before the body that governs global commerce. The Ministry of Public Security on Sunday made near identical charges and the Commerce Ministry also issued a closely worded statement. **Who does China say is to blame?** Trump accuses China of allowing the production of fentanyl,

which is then made into tablets in Mexico and smuggled into and distributed throughout the US, which records some 70,000 overdose deaths from the drug annually. China says the US must hold itself to account instead of "threatening other countries with arbitrary tariff hikes," the Foreign Ministry said. "The United States needs to view and solve its own fentanyl issue in an objective and rational way... (China is) one of the world's toughest countries on counter-narcotics both in terms of policy and its implementation." Experts say China executes an unknown number of people each year for smuggling drugs, but domestic drug use is relatively low. The Ministry of Public Security statement said the US has not reported any fentanyl precursor seizures originating in China since Beijing began to take legal action. **What other issues may be having an impact on the dispute?** China's enormous trade deficit with the US, which reached nearly USD 1 trillion last year, has been a constant target of Trump's complaints. Tariffs would make Chinese goods more expensive for US consumers, who will ultimately have to pay a significant part of the cost of importing everything from toys to clothing. China's vital export market could be impacted if US consumers decide to "buy American." The Chinese domestic economy has failed to respond to a range of government-backed stimuli, while foreign infrastructure projects and other major government initiatives that add to the country's already high public debt threaten more economic stagnation. That is already starting to derail Chinese President Xi Jinping's push to overtake the US in key economic and political indicators, threatening his ultimate ambition to conquer the island republic of Taiwan and assert Chinese primacy in the Indo-Pacific region. Stopping illegal immigration has also been one of Trump's core political messages, and was named in tariff actions against US neighbours Mexico and Canada. Illegal arrivals from China are considered a fraction of such numbers, but Trump has put virtually every country on notice that he will hold them accountable for their nationals who enter the US outside the law.

North Korea slams Rubio for calling it 'rogue' state

Seoul (PTI):

In its first direct criticism of the Trump administration, North Korea lashed out at US Secretary of State Marco Rubio for calling it a "rogue" state and warned Monday that such "coarse and nonsensical remarks" will never contribute to US interests. The statement is the latest in a series of North Korean signals that it will maintain its tough stance on the US for now, though Trump has said he's intent on reaching out to its leader Kim Jong Un to revive diplomacy. "The hostile words and deeds of the person who is in charge of the US foreign policy served as an occasion of confirming once again the US hostile policy toward the DPRK which remains unchanged," the Foreign Ministry said, using the acronym of the country's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "Rubio's coarse and nonsensical remarks only show directly the incorrect view of the new US administration on the DPRK and will never help promote the US interests as he wishes," it said. The statement took issue with what the ministry called Rubio's branding of North Korea as a "rogue" state in a media interview. It likely referred to Rubio's appearance on "The Megyn Kelly Show" on Jan. 30, in which he called North Korea and Iran "rogue states" as he addressed foreign policy challenges. It was not the first time for US officials to describe North Korea as a rogue state. But the North's latest statement suggests the country won't likely quickly embrace Trump's overture.

Trump 'agreed' USAID should be shut down: Musk

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US Agency for International Development is on the cusp of being shuttered, according to the Trump administration's billionaire adviser and Tesla CEO Elon Musk - who has been wrestling for control of the agency in recent days.



Early Monday, Musk held a live session on X Spaces, previously known as Twitter Spaces, and said that he spoke in detail about USAID with the president. "He agreed we should shut it down," Musk said. "It became apparent that its not an apple with a worm in it," Musk said. "What we have is just a ball of worms. You've got to basically get rid of the whole thing. It's beyond repair." "We're shutting it down." His comments come after the administration placed two top security chiefs at USAID on leave after they refused to turn over classified material in restricted areas to Musk's government-inspection teams, a current and a former US official told The Associated Press on Sunday. Members of Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE, eventually did gain access Saturday to the aid agency's classified information, which includes intelligence reports, the former official said. Musk's DOGE crew lacked high enough security clearance to access that information, so the two USAID security officials - John Voorhees and deputy Brian McGill - believed themselves legally obligated to deny access. The current and former US officials had knowledge of the incident and spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to share the information. Musk on Sunday responded to an X post about the news by saying, "USAID is a criminal organization. Time for it to die." He followed with additional posts on X about the aid agency. Kate Miller, who serves on an advisory board for DOGE, said in a separate post that no classified material was accessed "without proper security clearances." It comes a day after DOGE carried out a similar operation at the Treasury Department, gaining access to sensitive information including the Social Security and Medicare customer payment systems. The Washington Post reported that a senior Treasury official had

resigned over Musk's team accessing sensitive information. Musk formed DOGE in cooperation with the Trump administration with the stated goal of finding ways to fire federal workers, cut programs and slash federal regulations. USAID, whose website vanished Saturday without explanation, has been one of the federal agencies most targeted by the Trump administration in an escalating crackdown on the federal government and many of its programs. "It's been run by a bunch of radical lunatics. And we're getting them out," Trump said to reporters about USAID on Sunday night. The Trump administration and Secretary of State Marco Rubio have imposed an unprecedented freeze on foreign assistance that has shut down much of USAID's humanitarian, development and security programs worldwide - compelling thousands of layoffs by aid organizations - and ordered furloughs and leaves that have gutted the agency's leadership and staff in Washington. The US is by far the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid, with USAID administering billions of dollars in humanitarian, development and security assistance in more than 100 countries. Peter Marocco, a returning political appointee from Trump's first term, was a leader in enforcing the shutdown. USAID staffers say they believe that agency outsiders with visitors' badges asking questions of employees inside the Washington headquarters are members of Musk's DOGE team. Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren said in a post on Sunday that Trump was allowing Musk to access people's personal information and shut down government funding. "We must do everything in our power to push back and protect people from harm," the Massachusetts senator said, without giving details.

Denmark PM seeks support from EU partners

PTI ■ BRUSSELS

Denmark's prime minister insisted on Monday that Greenland is not for sale and called for a robust response from her European Union partners should US President Donald Trump press ahead with his threat to take control of the island. "I will never support the idea of fighting allies. But of course, if the US puts tough terms on Europe, we need a collective and robust response," Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told reporters in Brussels as EU leaders gathered for defense talks. Greenland, home to a large US military base, is an autonomous territory of Denmark, a long-time US ally. Last month, Trump left open the possibility that the American military might be used to secure Greenland, as well as the Panama Canal. "We need Greenland for national security purposes," he said. Frederiksen said she has "great support" from her EU partners on the fact "that everybody has

to respect the sovereignty of all national states in the world, and that Greenland is today a part of the Kingdom of Denmark. It's part of our territory and it's not for sale." She acknowledged US concerns about security in the Arctic Region, where Russia and China have been increasingly active. "I totally agree with the Americans that the High North, that the Arctic region is becoming more and more important when we are talking about defence and security and deterrence," Frederiksen said, adding that the US and Denmark could have "stronger footprints" in Greenland, in security terms. "They are already there and they can have more possibilities," she said, underlining that Denmark itself can also "scale up" its security presence. "If this is about securing our part of the world, we can find a way forward," Frederiksen said. Last week, her government announced a roughly 14.6 billion kroner (nearly \$2 billion) agreement with parties includ-



European Council President Antonio Costa, left, greets French President Emmanuel Macron as he arrives for an EU summit at the Egmont Palace in Brussels, on Monday

ing the governments of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands to "improve capabilities for surveillance and maintaining sovereignty in the region." It would include three new Arctic naval vessels, two additional long-range surveillance drones and satellite capacity, the Defence Ministry in Copenhagen said. Frederiksen's remarks came as EU leaders met for defence talks but with no clear sign yet from Trump about how he intends to try to end Russia's war on Ukraine. The Europeans fear that any attempt to pull together a quick deal would not be favourable to Ukraine. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte were set to join the bloc's 27 leaders at a self-styled "retreat" at Egmont Place in the Belgian capital. The summit agenda focuses on EU-US cooperation, military spending and ramping up Europe's defense industry. The meeting comes as Europe's biggest land conflict since World War II approaches its third anniversary, and with confidence in Trump shaky as he threatens his allies with tariffs. Trump already slapped duties on European steel and aluminum during his first term. "We were listening carefully to those words, and of course we are preparing also on our side," EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said. But, she underlined, "there are no winners in trade wars. If... the US starts a trade war, then the one laughing on the side is China. We are very interlinked."

B'desh abode of communal harmony, says Yunus

Dhaka (PTI):

Bangladesh belongs to all of its citizens and is a safe place for all people regardless of religion or caste, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has said, as he greeted members of the Hindu community on Saraswati Puja. Hindus in Bangladesh celebrated Saraswati Puja on Monday amid traditional enthusiasm, festivity and religious fervour. In a message on Sunday, Yunus said Bangladesh is an abode of communal harmony. "For thousands of years, people of all religions have been living together in this country irrespective of caste, colour and religion," he said. "The country belongs to all of us and is a safe place for all people regardless of religion or caste," he added. Yunus took over as the country's interim leader after a student-led uprising last year forced former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to flee to India on August 5, ending her 15-year rule. The interim government "has been relentlessly working to improve the fate of all irrespective of race, religion, and caste and ensure their equal rights," Yunus said. The goddess Saraswati is a symbol of truth, justice, and the light of knowledge, he said.

Schools closed, emergency crews deployed on volcanic Greek island

Spike in seismic activity raises quake concerns

PTI ■ SANTORINI (GREECE)

Schools were closed and emergency crews deployed on the volcanic Greek island of Santorini on Monday after a spike in seismic activity raised concerns about a potentially powerful earthquake. Precautions were also ordered on several nearby Aegean Sea islands — all popular summer vacation destinations — after more than 200 undersea earthquakes were recorded in the area over the past three days. "These measures are precautionary, and authorities will remain vigilant," Civil Protection Minister Vasilis Kikilias said late Sunday following an emergency government meeting in Athens. "We urge citizens to strictly adhere to safety recommendations to minimise risk." While Greek experts say the quakes, measuring up to magnitude 4.7, are not linked to Santorini's volcano, they acknowledge that the pattern of seismic activity is cause for concern. Government officials met with scientists throughout the weekend and on Monday to assess the situation, while schools were ordered shut on the nearby islands of Amorgos, Anafi and Ios. On Santorini, residents and visitors were advised to avoid large



indoor gatherings and areas where rock slides could occur, while hotels were instructed to drain swimming pools to reduce potential building damage from an earthquake. Fire Service rescuers who arrived on the island on Sunday set up yellow tents as a staging area inside a basketball court next to the island's main hospital. "We arrived last night, a 26-member team of rescuers and one rescue dog," said fire brigadier Ioannis Billias. Quakes continued rattling the island through the night and on Monday morning, many over magnitude 4.0, and Billias said many residents, including entire families, spent the night in their cars. Crescent-shaped Santorini is a premier tourism destination with daily arrivals via commercial flights, ferries, and cruise ships. The island draws more

than 3 million visitors annually to its whitewashed villages, built along dramatic cliffs formed by a massive volcanic eruption more than 3,500 years ago. Prominent Greek seismologist Gerasimos Papadopoulos cautioned that the current earthquake sequence — displayed on live seismic maps as a growing cluster of dots between the islands of Santorini, Ios, Amorgos, and Anafi — could indicate a larger impending event. "All scenarios remain open," Papadopoulos wrote in an online post. "The number of tremors has increased, magnitudes have risen, and epicentres have shifted northeast. While these are tectonic quakes, not volcanic, the risk level has escalated." In Santorini's main town of Fira, local authorities designated gathering points for residents in preparation for a potential evacuation, though Mayor Nikos Zorzos emphasized the preventive nature of the measures. "We are obliged to make preparations. But being prepared for something does not mean it will happen," he said during a weekend briefing. "Sometimes, the way the situation is reported, those reports may contain exaggerations... so people should stay calm."

At least 19 killed, mostly women, in car bomb blast in northern Syria

PTI ■ DAMASCUS (SYRIA)

A car bomb exploded on the outskirts of a northern Syrian city on Monday, killing at least 19 people, all but one of them women, and leaving more than a dozen wounded, hospital workers said. The car detonated next to a vehicle carrying mostly female agricultural workers on the outskirts of the city of Manbij. The dead included 18 women and one man, a nurse at the hospital, Mohammad Ahmad, told The Associated Press. Another 15 women were wounded, some of them in critical condition, according to the local Syrian civil defence. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the explosion. It was the seventh car bomb explosion in Manbij in just over a month, said Munir Mustafa, the deputy director of civil defence. Manbij in northeastern Aleppo province continues to witness violence even after the downfall of President Bashar Assad in December. Turkish-backed factions, known as the Syrian National Army, have clashed with the US-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. The factions took the city from the SDF in early December during

a lightning insurgency that toppled President Bashar Assad. A resident said the car that detonated was parked on the roadside. The recurring attacks have forced residents to become more vigilant, he said. "There are efforts from the people of Manbij to focus on protecting some neighbourhoods as well as setting up surveillance cameras in the main neighbourhoods of the city," Jameel al-Sayyed, a Manbij activist and journalist said. Mustafa warned that the attacks in Aleppo province near Syria's second city are a threat to Syria's progress to bring about post-war security and economic recovery. Most of the explosions took place at night. "The continued attacks on Syrian civilian areas and targeting civilians while they are trying to recover from the effects of the war of the defunct Assad regime... threaten their lives, deepens their humanitarian tragedy, undermines educational and agricultural activities and livelihoods, and worsens the humanitarian situation in Syria," Mustafa said. A car bombing in Manbij on Saturday killed four civilians and wounded nine, state news agency SANA reported, citing civil defense officials.

Pakistan Prez Zardari to leave for China on 5-day state visit today

Islamabad (PTI) President Asif Ali Zardari will travel to China on Tuesday on a five-day state visit during which he will discuss a broad spectrum of bilateral relations with the Chinese leaders...

Their "discussions will encompass the full spectrum of Pakistan-China relations, with a particular focus on economic and trade cooperation; counter-terrorism and security collaboration; China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and future connectivity initiatives..."

Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments across the world.

forces personnel, 54 civilians and 10 militants. The report highlighted an intensified counterterrorism campaign by security forces, which led to elimination of at least 185 militants in January, making it the second deadliest month for militant casualties since 2016.

Officials: Remains of 55 of 67 victims of midair collision identified

Arlington (PTI): Authorities said Sunday they have recovered the remains of 55 of the 67 people killed in the deadliest US air disaster since 2001. Washington, DC Fire and EMS Chief John Donnelly said at a news conference that divers still need to find the bodies of 12 more victims and are committed to the dignified recovery of remains as they prepare to lift wreckage from the Potomac River as early as Monday morning.

Public Notice: General public is hereby informed that my clients Kshitiz Bhatnagar S/o Late Arun Kumar Bhatnagar, his wife Smt. Anshika Bhatnagar and their daughter Ms. Tushika Bhatnagar all R/o SRE 58C, Shilpa Riviera, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad (U.P.) 201010. The present declaration signifies that as of today, my clients will not be involved in any sort of social or family affairs with the above said person. My clients further undertake to not interfere in his personal life or activities and explicitly renounce any form of connection or communication with him. Anybody dealing with the said person shall do at their own risk and responsibility and my clients shall not be responsible for the same.

Public Notice: Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Lakshmi Devi who is purchasing the Residential built up Third Floor with roof terrace rights, built on property bearing No. L-38-A, having plot area 65 sqm measuring 75 sq yards out of Kharsa No. 30, situated in the area of village nagali, colony known as 'New Ashwari Nagar' in block-1, Gali No. 13, New Delhi from Mrs. Deepika Bala W/o Mr. Rajesh Bala who was the owner of property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 25.08.2022 (Doc. No. 21180) executed by Mrs. Deepika Bala W/o Mr. Rajesh Bala. To this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or claiming any right in the said property, please contact me at the address mentioned below in writing to the undersigned within 07 days of below address.

Public Notice: This is to inform the general public that Mr. Vijay Sharma, Mr. Vishal Sharma & Mr. Kunal Sharma are the owner of PLOT no. 281, property ID no. 'D/F/NF/2 area measuring 209 sq. mts. situated at 7A, Upper Estate HSE Flat Road, T-8/1 Bhatnagar, Distt. Faridkot, Haryana through Transfer Deed in good relation dated '09/2025' as doc. No. 1997 executed by Mr. Tarun Lal in favour of Mr. Vijay Sharma, Mr. Vishal Sharma & Mr. Kunal Sharma in respect of the said property with Tata Capital Limited. Any objection or concerns regarding this transaction should be made within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. If any objections submitted after the completion of the 7-day period will not be considered. If any person(s) to the said property or the interest of it, they are interested, please do so in the stipulated 7-days period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. 4/A-4A, Sector-15, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301. Landline(s): +910120-3310683, e-mail: accounts@vnorth.in

Public Notice: Notice is hereby given on behalf of SAUMYA GUPTA with respect to FIRST FLOOR WITHOUT ROOF/TERRACE RIGHTS OF BUILT UP PROPERTY BEARING NO.15-A, AREA MEASURING 80 sq. YDS, CUT OFF KHARSA NO.19/20, SITUATED IN THE REVENUE ESTATE OF VILLAGE MATIALA, KNOWN AS COLONY JAINU COLONY, IN BLOCK-1 EXTN. PART III, UTTAM NAGAR, NEAR DEVI'S BHARI HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED. To comply with the requirements of BSM/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person having any copy of this right in the said property, please inform the undersigned before about 07 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of encumbrances, liens, mortgages, legal disputes, etc. Plot No. 136, (B/S) Omnidrop Uday Park, New Delhi-110049 Contact # 911-4046316

CCL Central Coalfields Limited "A Miniratna Company" (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited) NOTICE All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in/ respective Subsidiary Company (CCL, www.centralcoalfields.in), CIL e-procurement portal https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Public Procurement Portal https://eprocure.gov.in in addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal https://gem.gov.in

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION PHONE NO: (0240)-2333536-40,2348001-05 (PBX) FAX-(0240)-2331213 website:-http://www.aurangabadmahapalika.org/

Table with 3 columns: Sr No, Description, Details. E-Tender Notice No 2025-AMCA-114533-I/2024-25. Details of project for Sports Complex and Commercial Shops under P.G.3 at TV Centre N10 in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar Municipal Corporation on Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) Basis.

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022, EPABX NO. 0172-5041812, 66 Notice Inviting Tender www.verka.coop

Table with 3 columns: Sr. No, Name of Work/Item, Period/Tentative Qty. Items include For Verka Head Office, Chandigarh Di-Calcium Phosphate, For Verka Bathinda Dairy, etc.

Reuniting those lost in this tragic incident is really what keeps us all going," said Colonel Francis B Pera of the Army Corps of Engineers. Portions of the aircraft will be loaded onto flatbed trucks and taken to a hangar for further investigation. They spoke hours after families of the victims visited the crash site just outside Washington, DC, walking along the banks of the Potomac River near Reagan National Airport to memorialize their loved ones. Dozens of people arrived in buses with a police escort close to where an American Airlines jet and an Army Black Hawk helicopter collided Wednesday, killing all 67 aboard the two aircraft. Federal investigators were working to piece together the events that led to the crash while recovery crews were set to pull more wreckage from the chilly water.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS CHANGE OF NAME I, Dontha Karuna W/o No.15218801A Hav (DS) Dontha Siddaiah Gud, R/o-9-67-38, H S Kottala, Kanala, Kurnool, A.P.- 518593, have changed my name from Dontha Karuna to Kancharla Karuna, vide affidavit dated 03/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1383)C I, Bala Devi, Mother of No.14832213Y Hav Baljeet Singh, R/o- Varil & Post-Hoshdarpur Garhi, Teh & Dist- Hapur, U.P.- 245101, have changed my name from Bala Devi to Bala, vide affidavit dated 03/02/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

Public Notice: Reg. Entire Third Floor with roof terrace rights 'Satd Floor', at part of Property Bearing No. 305, area measuring 80 sq. yds, falling in Kharsa No. 144, min. Situated at Amrit Pur (B), in the area of Village Gauri/Jhansi near Jagat Nagar, New Delhi. (Hereinafter referred to as the 'Said Property'). Be it known to all that our client, Mrs. Beena (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intends to purchase the said floor from Mr. Anand Mishra, Attorney of Mr. Tan Sukh Khimji Shingadia (hereinafter called the "Attorney-holder"). In this connection the Attorney-holder has informed the purchaser that she is the sole and absolute attorney holder in respect of the said floor of the said property vide POA documents viz., G.P.A. and W.D dated 11.11.1996 executed by Mr. Tan Sukh Khimji Shingadia in his favour.

Public Notice: This is to inform the general public that Kailash Narain Mehra intends to transfer the ownership of the above-mentioned property by way of Sale Deed to Shavirvi Devi. Subsequently, Shavirvi Devi is in the process of mortgaging the said property with SBI India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.). Any objector or concern regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered.

Public Notice: NOTICE is hereby given that Mr. Brijesh Kumar Jain is mortgaging One shop on ground floor bearing Shop Municipal no. 466, having its area measuring 127.88 sq. ft., or say 11.68 sq. mtrs., approx. upto calling level, without roof rights, (sahd shop), situated at Near Katra Mohan, Main Road Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110005 with AU Small Finance Bank Ltd.

S Korean appeals court upholds acquittal of Samsung chief Seoul (AP): A South Korean appeals court on Monday upheld a lower court's ruling that acquitted Samsung Electronics Chairman Lee Jaeyong of financial criminal charges over a contentious merger between Samsung affiliates that cemented his grip over the biggest South Korean company. The Seoul High Court rejected an appeal by prosecutors. You Jin Kim, Lee's lawyer, welcomed the ruling, saying he hopes that Lee would now focus on his company following Monday's verdict. Prosecutors can again appeal to the Supreme Court, whose rulings are final. In February 2024, the Seoul Central District Court said the prosecution failed to sufficiently prove the merger between Samsung C&T and Cheil Industries was unlawfully conducted with an aim to strengthen Lee's control over Samsung Electronics. Lee, a third-generation corporate heir who was officially appointed chairman of Samsung Electronics in October 2022, has led the Samsung group of companies since 2014, when his late father, former chairman Lee Kun-hee, suffered a heart attack.

Format C-1 (for candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV) Declaration about criminal cases (As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.) Name and address of candidate: Pushpa Singh W/o Late Satbir Singh R/o. 301, Ward No.4, Mehrauli, New Delhi-30 Name of political party: INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS Name of Election: DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2025 *Name of Constituency: AC 45, MEHRAULI, VIDHANSABHA I, Pushpa Singh, a candidate for the above-mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

Format C-1 (For candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV) Declaration about criminal cases (As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union Of India & Anr.) Name and address of the candidate : Sharad Kumar R/o 123 Bhumiya Wala Chowk Bakoli Delhi-36 Name Of the Political party : AAM AADMI PARTY(AAP) Name of election: DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 2025 Name of the Constituency: AC-01 NERELA,VIDHANSABHA I, Sharad Kumar, a candidate for the above-mentioned election, declare for public information. The following details about my criminal antecedents:

कार्यालय नगर निगम गुरुग्राम सर्वजनिक सूचना नगर निगम गुरुग्राम के नगर निकाय में वृत्तिक गैरवेस्टेज ऑफिस की नई 101, 20025 स्थान को 12465, SIECTOR 3 & 3 PALAM VIHAR, Gurgaon में नया कर कार्यवाही का प्रस्ताव किया गया है...

JINDAL LEASEFIN LIMITED CIN : L74899DL1994PL0059252 Regd. Office: 110, Baratar Road, New Delhi - 110 001 Ph: 011 46201030, Fax: 011 46201022, E-mail: jindalfin@jindalfin.com Website: www.jindalfin.com NOTICE is hereby given that the Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the members of Jindal Leasefin Limited will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at Kejriwal Farm House, Holambi Kalan Narela, Delhi - 110 082 to transact the business as set out in the Notice convening the EGM in compliance with applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 ('Act') and rules made thereunder and Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015 read with all the applicable circulars issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs ('MCA Circulars') and Securities and Exchange Board of India ('SEBI Circulars') (MCA Circulars and SEBI Circulars collectively referred as 'Circulars').

Sitharaman encourages states to approach Finance Commission on tax concerns

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With southern states voicing concerns over 'unfair' tax money devolution, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said the states have to engage and highlight their concerns with the 16th Finance Commission, whose recommendations will decide how the funds are divided.

Population is one of the criteria used by Finance Commissions to decide how the tax revenues are divided. Southern states, which have managed to check the rise in population, feel they get a raw deal when compared to the northern states with much larger population growth.

In an interview with PTI, Sitharaman said the central government does not decide



on the devolution formula. The devolution of taxes is made in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Commission and the aggrieved southern states should approach the panel for change in parameters. "It is for the states to engage with the Finance Commission to express their concerns about the parameters based on which the tax devolution principles are laid down by them. "And if they think over a decade, they've had a distinctly different paradigm happening there. It is for them to highlight those issues to the Finance

Commission," she said. After all, she said, the Centre takes the Finance Commission's recommendations, particularly on the core suggestions, and follows them. It is not appropriate for them to voice concerns as the central government does not decide devolution of taxes, she added. The Finance Commission typically gives recommendations for the division of tax revenues for five years. The 13th Finance Commission gave recommendations for 2010-11 to 2014-15 and its successor recommended formula for 2015-16 to 2019-20. The 15th Finance Commission gave suggestions for 2020-21 in its first report and then for 2021-2025-26.

Give suggestions on new income tax bill: CBDT chief to industry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chief Ravi Agrawal on Monday asked industry players to give their suggestions on the new income tax bill, which will be tabled in Parliament this week.

The new income tax bill, which will replace the six decade old Income Tax act, 1961, has been drafted within six months and efforts have been made to simplify the language to make tax compliance easier for taxpayers and make it easier to read and understand. Agrawal said that the new bill has been drafted in such a way that it meets international standards. Also, the new law has been made concise, as old provisions have been removed, making it less bulky. He asked the industry to give

their suggestions once the new bill is introduced and assured them that the suggestions would be looked into. With regard to updated I-T returns (ITR-U), Agrawal said in the last three years about 90 Lakh such returns were filed. Around ₹8,500 Crore additional revenues were garnered. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech had said that the time limit to file updated ITRs for any assessment year will be extended from the current limit of two years to four years.

India's manufacturing growth peaks at six-month high in January

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's manufacturing sector growth started the year 2025 on a strong footing and touched a six-month high in January, fuelled by the steepest upturn in exports in nearly 14 years, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBG India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from December's one-year low of 56.4 to 57.7 in January supported by the fastest upturn in new export orders since February 2011. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "India's final manufacturing PMI marked a six-month high in January. Domestic and export demand were both strong, supporting new orders growth," said Pranjal Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBG.

Goods producers attributed the substantial increase in new orders to better domestic demand and a pick-up in international sales. Subsequently, manufacturers in India continued to scale up production volumes. The latest increase was substantial and the fastest since October 2024. Going forward, companies turned more optimistic about

output prospects, with nearly 32 per cent of firms forecasting growth and just one per cent expecting a reduction. According to panel members, buoyant underlying demand, better customer relations, favourable economic conditions and marketing efforts all bode well for growth prospects. Robust sales gains and upbeat forecasts prompted companies to recruit additional workers at the start of the fourth quarter of this fiscal year. "The employment PMI suggested robust job creation in the manufacturing industry, as the index increased to its highest level since the series was created. Input cost inflation eased for a second month, relieving pressure on manufacturers to raise final output prices," Bhandari noted. On the price front, cost pressures retreated to their weakest in 11 months, but selling prices rose solidly amid buoyant demand. The survey further noted that capacity pressures among manufacturers in India remained mild. Underlying data showed that strong job creation in recent months enabled companies to stay on top of their workloads, the survey said.

India's customs duty cut to 10.66 per cent: CBIC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has significantly reduced its average customs duty rate to 10.66 per cent from 11.65 per cent and is now moving towards the same levels as prevalent in the Southeast Asian countries, a senior government official said on Monday.

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman Sanjay Kumar Agarwal said the rate rationalisation exercise was carried out with the objective of making the tariff structure simple, ensuring competitiveness of Indian

industry and simplifying the tax regime. "Now the average customs rate in India has come down from 11.65 per cent to 10.66 per cent and we are now moving towards the average rate in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries," he said here at an interaction with industry representatives. The 10-nation bloc ASEAN countries are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The exercise was also important for dispelling the

narrative of developed countries like the US that India has one of the highest tariffs. The US President Donald Trump's administration has accused India of being "tariff king" and "tariff abuser". He noted that in the high duty brackets from 25 per cent to 150 per cent, only a few products are available in the country. "There are very few items on these high rates...Rates are otherwise in the narrow band of zero to 10 per cent," he said, adding that steps have also been announced in the Budget 2025-26 in this

direction. The government has rationalised basic customs duty rates, slashing the number of levies to just eight, but has kept the effective duty rates on most items the same by adjusting cess to further ease of doing business. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman removed seven tariff rates in the 2025-26 Budget. This is over and above the seven tariff rates removed in the 2023-24 budget. After this, there will be only eight remaining tariff rates, including a 'zero' rate to further ease of doing business.

This rationalisation is designed to simplify the tariff structure, enhance trade competitiveness, and support India's integration into global supply chains, he added. He said the thrust in the budget was to ensure adequate availability of the items which are critical for manufacturing in the country like critical minerals. These minerals, he said, are required for manufacturing areas like semiconductors, for transitioning to clean energy and for space programmes. These minerals are not available in the country and they are imported.

BharatPe CMO Parth Joshi resigns to launch new venture



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parth Joshi, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of BharatPe has resigned to launch his own venture in consumer brands space, according to sources in the industry. Joshi was appointed as BharatPe's CMO in June 2021. "After an incredible journey at BharatPe, I have decided to take the next step and pursue my entrepreneurial ambitions. I am grateful for the opportunities, learnings, and support I have received during my time here. BharatPe has always encouraged innovation and leadership, and I leave with nothing but appreciation for the team and the culture that fosters growth," Joshi said.

Gold jumps ₹400 to breach ₹85,000-mark

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices jumped ₹400 to hit a fresh record high of ₹85,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday on the back of continued demand by jewellers and stocks, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Traders said sharp depreciation in rupee and firm trends in the international markets lifted gold rates to record high levels. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at ₹84,900 per 10 grams on Saturday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity rose for the fourth straight session by climbing ₹400 to hit another record high of ₹84,900 per 10 grams. The yellow metal ended at ₹84,500 per 10 grams in the previous trading session. Rallying for the fifth consecutive session, silver increased ₹300 to ₹96,000 per kg on Monday. The white metal finished at ₹95,700 per kg in the previous market close. On Monday, the rupee plunged 55 paise to close at an all-time low of 87.17 (provisional) against the US dollar as global

market sentiments were impacted after the Trump administration slapped tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and China. In futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for April delivery increased ₹461, or 0.56 per cent, to ₹82,765 per 10 grams. "Gold rallied positively on MCX. Participants increased gold allocations as concerns over a potential Trade War 2.0 from the US triggered safe-haven demand," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst of Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said.

Hindustan Media Ventures posts Q3 net profit at ₹18 Crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hindustan Media Ventures Ltd (HMVL) on Monday reported a consolidated profit after tax of ₹18 Crore in the December quarter. The company had posted a loss after tax of ₹0.82 Crore in the October-December period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by HMVL, the publisher of Hindi daily Hindustan. Its revenue from operations rose eight per cent to ₹197.47

₹182.95 Crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Total expenses of HMVL were ₹201.68 crore, down 3.2 per cent in the December quarter. Its revenue from printing and publishing of newspapers and periodicals was ₹179.72 Crore. HMVL's revenue from Digital jumped four-fold to ₹16.72 Crore in the December quarter against ₹4.18 Crore in the corresponding quarter.

Agriculture industry hails Budget as bold play for revitalising rural India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Experts and farmers on Saturday welcomed the comprehensive package to revitalise agriculture sector, calling it "bold and a Mahakumbh of reforms. Susheel Kumar, Country Head and Managing Director of Syngenta India Pvt Ltd, lauded the budget for its commitment to bridging the urban-rural divide. "This Budget reflects a clear intent to create new opportunities for farmers, youth, women, and agri-entrepreneurs, ensuring inclusive growth across the agricultural sector. It is encouraging that the

government is leveraging India's demographic dividend to engage rural youth in agricultural activities," he said. "Hybrid seed varieties should be included in the National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds. Also, reinstating the 200 per cent income tax deduction for R&D would be crucial for attracting private investment." Ajai Rana, chairman of the Federation of Seed Industry of India and CEO and MD, Savannah Seeds emphasised. He praised the Budget's focus on advancing research and seed innovation. He highlighted the National Mission on

High-Yielding Seeds and the Mission on Cotton Productivity as key policy reforms that would significantly benefit the seed industry. However, some expressed concerns over unmet expectations. Dr. KC Ravi, Chief Sustainability Officer of Syngenta India, noted the absence of long-standing demands, including GST rationalisation and an extension of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to the agrochemicals sector. "The Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0 is a welcome reform, but we hope similar trust-based governance is extended to the crop protection industry," he remarked.

Investors from EFTA bloc, Israel coming to India to explore business opportunities

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A large contingent of investors from four European nation bloc European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and Israel are visiting India next week to explore business opportunities, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said. The EFTA members are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. Visit of more than 100 investors from EFTA member countries assumes significance as it has signed a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with India on March 10, 2024. Under the pact, India has received an investment

commitment of USD 100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products such as Swiss watches, chocolates, and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties. The pact is expected to come into force by the end of this year. Goyal said EFTA representatives are coming with over 100 investors. More than 200 investors are expected to visit from Israel. The three-day visit will start from February 10. "Big companies are coming. People with interests in technology and setting manufacturing units (are coming)," he added. The EFTA bloc committed an investment of USD 100 billion -

USD 50 billion within 10 years after the implementation of the agreement and another USD 50 billion in the next five years - which would facilitate the creation of one million direct jobs in India. This is a first-of-its-kind pledge agreed upon in any of the trade deals signed by India so far. EFTA countries are not part of the European Union (EU). It is an inter-governmental organisation for the promotion and intensification of free trade. It was founded as an alternative for states that did not wish to join the European community. India is separately negotiating a comprehensive free trade agreement with the EU, the 27-nation bloc.

INBRIEF

REC WINS GOLD SHIELD IN ICAI AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

NEW DELHI: REC Limited, a Maharatna Public Sector Enterprise and a leading NBFC-IFC under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, has been awarded 'Gold Shield' in ICAI Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the financial year 2023-24.



SCHOOL EDUCATION IS MOTHER OF ALL EDUCATION- PROF K K AGGARWAL



NEW DELHI: School education is mother of all education. The final product depends on the raw product. That is why formative but foundation stage of school education must be taken care of very seriously, said Prof K K Aggarwal, President, South Asian University.

SCIENCE NEEDS DEMOCRACY TO FLOURISH: PROF AARON CIECHANOVER

KATTANKULATHUR: Nobel Laureate Prof Aaron Ciechanover delivered a special address at the inaugural of Pro UPS conference held at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST). The conference focused on protein homeostasis, its impact on human diseases, and drug discovery.



GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SHINE AT NATIONAL BOTANICAL FESTIVAL



AMRITSAR: A group of Master's students of M Sc Botany from the Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences, Guru Nanak Dev University, completed a four-day visit to the Statue of Unity for participating in National Botany Fest 2025, which took place recently at Gujarat. The event was inaugurated by Dr A A Mao, Director of the Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata.

Cooperative renaissance through Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill, 2024



BINOD ANAND ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to strengthening the cooperative sector has taken a major step forward with the introduction of the Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill, 2024. This initiative aims to establish Tribhuvan Sahkari University, dedicated to cooperative education, research, and management training. It will play a pivotal role in achieving the vision of "Sahkar Se Samridhhi" (Prosperity through

Cooperation) by equipping professionals with the skills necessary to enhance innovation and efficiency in cooperative enterprises. The cooperative sector is vital to India's socio-economic structure, providing livelihoods to millions. Recognising its potential, the government has introduced structured education and training through this university. By integrating cooperative principles into mainstream education, the institution will offer specialised courses to empower students, cooperative society members, and industry professionals. This initiative will also foster research and development, bridging existing knowledge gaps and strengthening India's cooperative movement on a global scale. A key feature of this initiative is going to be the blend of

ancient wisdom with modern education aligns with Modi's vision of a self-reliant and culturally enriched India. The curriculum will emphasise holistic learning, integrating traditional Indian economic philosophies with contemporary management techniques. Inspired by Vedic traditions, students will learn about sustainable agricultural practices, ethical business conduct, and community-driven economic models. Another objective of the university is to standardise cooperative education across India. Currently, cooperative training is fragmented and lacks uniformity. By offering diploma, degree, and certification programs in sectors such as dairy, fisheries, agriculture, banking, and marketing, the university will streamline cooperative education. Tribhuvan Sahkari University

will also act as a central institution, converging resources from ICAR centers, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, CSIR institutions, health-related institutes, and other universities. This will train PACS secretaries and support national development programs, ensuring a multi-disciplinary approach to cooperative growth. Moving beyond the traditional MSP model, the university will help cooperatives adopt market-driven solutions and self-sustaining business models. Additionally, it will align with health institutions to develop cooperative models for rural healthcare, ensuring affordable medical services. A major goal of the university is to protect national interests by securing the economic rights of farmers and artisans. Farmers and artisans form the backbone of India's rural economy, and their prosperity

is critical for national self-reliance. The university also has a long-term economic vision: to generate 50 per cent of India's Gross National Product (GNP) from the cooperative sector by 2047. Through research, training, and policy advocacy, it will incubate human resources that drive entrepreneurship, create employment, and foster financial inclusion. By advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and transitioning toward Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, the university will prepare cooperatives for long-term sustainability. Encouraging green technologies, ethical business practices, and inclusive governance, this initiative will position India as a global leader in sustainable cooperative development. The university will redefine

cooperative education, positioning cooperatives as key drivers of economic and social transformation. It will conduct research on global cooperative models, blockchain in cooperatives, and strategies to enhance cooperative entrepreneurship through mentorship and funding initiatives. The introduction of the Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership and dedication to inclusive economic growth through cooperative empowerment. This initiative will create a new generation of skilled professionals dedicated to strengthening India's cooperative movement. As India moves towards economic self-sufficiency, the cooperative sector will play a pivotal role in sustainable development and rural prosperity.

Jonathan, Kaur clinch gold at National Games

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

Fifteen-year-old Bengaluru shooter Jonathan Antony delivered a grand performance on the biggest domestic stage when he outwitted Paris Olympics bronze-medallist Sarabjot Singh and the more fancied Saurabh Chaudhary to clinch the 10m air pistol gold at the National Games here on Monday.

Jonathan, whose shooting career took wings when he won gold in the CBSE South Zone Rifle Shooting Competition in 2022 while studying in eighth standard, shot a superb 240.7 for Karnataka in the final to overcome the challenge of Services veterans Ravinder Singh (silver, 240.3) and Gurpreet Singh (bronze, 220.1) and Sarabjot, who won a bronze in the Paris Olympics' 10m air pistol

mixed team event with Manu Bhaker last year. Sarabjot finished fourth on Monday.

The champion marksman had earlier entered the final placed eighth with a score of 578, denying Olympian and national record holder Saurabh Chaudhary, who also shot an identical score but missed out in the shoot-off to finish ninth and out of contention for the eight-shooter final.

Ravinder topped the qualification with 584, while Sarabjot finished second with an aggregate of 583.

Jonathan showed nerves of steel in the medal round despite some of his shots fetching him low-nine scores. This would count as Jonathan's biggest achievement in the senior category after the Bengaluru teenager won the 10m air pistol mixed team (junior)



Jonathan Antony (left) and Kaur Samra (right) celebrating their gold medals at the National Games.

Punjab's Sift Kaur Samra secured gold in the women's 50m rifle 3-positions event after shooting a superb 461.2 to overcome the challenge of state-mate Olympian Anjum Moudgil, who shot 458.7.

Surabhi Bharadwaj of Telangana bagged the bronze medal, shooting 448.8.

The 23-year-old Samra, an Asian Games gold medallist, produced a commanding performance in the qualification round as well to finish second behind Madhya Pradesh's Ashi Chouksey (598).

Ashi was in a different zone in the qualification but she could not maintain the rhythm in the final to finish a dismal seventh.

"This feels like a comeback for me after the Olympics," said Samra, who had a forgettable Paris Olympics. "I didn't take a break (after Paris) and kept training, so winning the gold today feels

special," Samra said in a press release.

"I'm pleased with how I executed my routine and the small details that made the difference. It's also wonderful to share the podium with Anjum, who's an incredible shooter," Moudgil, also from Punjab, claimed the silver medal with 458.7 points.

"This is the third National Games where Sift and I have finished on the podium together. She's an extraordinary shooter, and I've always admired her," said Moudgil, a winner of two silver medals at the 2018 World Championships.

"While my scores weren't great in the beginning, I knew that staying calm and focused would get me to the podium. This has been the best shooting range I've competed in and the organisation has been fantastic."

Manchester City thrashed 5-1 by Arsenal and in Premier League

PTI ■ LONDON

After a recent uplift in their results, the pain returned for Manchester City and Manchester United in the Premier League.

City conceded a goal inside two minutes and was overwhelmed in the second half in a 5-1 loss at Arsenal, which trimmed the gap to leader Liverpool to six points on Sunday.

United lost again at home, 2-0 to Crystal Palace, and now

has seven defeats in 13 league games at Old Trafford this season — something not seen since the 1890s.

The chances of City winning a fifth straight Premier League title are surely over — the champions are 15 points behind Liverpool with 14 matches remaining — and they must have felt humiliated by the end of the game at Emirates that again demonstrated the new-found hostility between Arsenal and City.

City arrived having won six of its last eight games in all competitions but all is still not right with Pep Guardiola's team, which let in a sloppy opener when Manuel Akanji

was dispossessed near his own area and Martin Odegaard scored.

Haaland was goaded after that goal by Gabriel in a hangover from the spiky 2-2 draw between the teams in September but responded by equalizing in the 55th.

Arsenal went back in front in the 57th through Thomas Partey's deflected shot and there were further goals from Myles Lewis-Skelly, Kai Havertz and Ethan Nwaneri as City fell apart in a similar fashion to the 4-2 loss at Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League last month.

"How we played in the last 30 minutes is not acceptable. It's not us," City defender John Stones said. "I'm angry, upset."

Arsenal reveled in the win. Lewis-Skelly, an 18-year-old defender, marked his goal by sitting down, crossing his legs and delivering a "Zen" celebration — one often used by Haaland. And when the final whistle sounded, the home team played Kendrick Lamar's "Humble" loudly around the stadium — surely a nod to Haaland telling Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta to "stay humble" after the 2-2 draw in September.

"This is a thing that's been building up over a certain amount of time," Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice said. "With the Etihad at the start of the season and everything that went on there, you do have that fire in your stomach."

Arsenal was alone in second

place, three points above Nottingham Forest and nine above fourth-placed City.

MARTINEZ SUSTAINS SERIOUS INJURY IN UNITED LOSS

On the day locally born striker Marcus Rashford edged closer to a departure from Old Trafford, Manchester United lacked a cutting edge up front in the loss to Crystal Palace.

And there was more bad news Sunday for United with a tearful Lisandro Martinez carried off on a stretcher with a left knee injury — the latest injury to afflict the Argentina defender.

Jean-Philippe Mateta scored both goals in the second half for Palace to end United's three-match winning run in

all competitions — a streak coming after manager Ruben Amorim had called his team "the worst team, maybe, in the history of Manchester United."

The Amorim era looks set to be without Rashford, at least until the end of the season, with the forward reportedly undergoing a medical examination at Aston Villa ahead of sealing a loan move with a view to a permanent transfer.

Even with striker Rashford absent, Amorim fielded a team with no out-and-out striker and failed to create many good chances against Palace, which picked off United on the counterattack.

Mateta's goals came in the 64th and 89th minutes. United has lost seven of its

first 13 home games in the Premier League this season and that hasn't happened since the 1893-94 season, according to the competition's statistic supplier, Opta. Five of those defeats have come in the last six home matches under Amorim.

"It is difficult to play here because we want to please our fans," Amorim said. "This season is going to be like that, I said it since the first day."

RELIEF FOR POSTECOGLOU AS TOTTENHAM WINS

United dropped to 13th in the standings and was just one place and two points ahead of Tottenham, which won 2-0 at Brentford to end a four-match losing run in the league and ease some

pressure on manager Ange Postecoglou.

Vitaly Janelt scored an own-goal at a corner to put Tottenham ahead at halftime and Pape Sarr added the second goal in the 87th.

"We needed a big effort again today, a physical effort. We put that in," said Postecoglou, who rested defender Micky van de Ven after the defender returned from injury in the midweek win over Elfsborg in the Europa League.

"Outstanding effort by the players." The result was a huge boost for Tottenham ahead of arguably the team's biggest match of the season, the second leg of the English League Cup semifinals against Liverpool on Thursday.

नाम परिवर्तन

मैं ललिता उर्फ कौशल्यारानी राठी (Lalita urf Kaushalyarani Rathor) पत्नी श्री मोहनलाल राठी सर्वसाधारण को सूचित करती हूँ कि मेरे कुछ शासकीय/अर्धशासकीय/अन्य दस्तावेजों में मेरा नाम ललिता उर्फ कौशल्यारानी राठी, कुछ में ललिता राठी, और अन्य दस्तावेजों में कौशल्या राठी अंकित है। ललिता उर्फ कौशल्यारानी राठी, ललिता राठी एवं कौशल्या राठी ये नाम एक ही व्यक्ति के हैं याने की मेरे इस प्रकाशन के उपरान्त मुझे सभी शासकीय/अर्धशासकीय/अन्य दस्तावेजों में मुझे ललिता राठी पत्नी श्री मोहनलाल राठी के नाम से ही जाना, पहचाना, लिखा, पढ़ा एवं पुकारा जाए।

Change of Name

I Iram Qureshi wife of Farhan Qureshi resident of plot no. 31, Kabadkhana Bhopal M.P. That my daughter's previous name was Laiba Quraishi which I want to change to Nabiya Qureshi. Hence after publication my daughter should be recognized and recorded by her correct name Nabiya Qureshi

Old name Laiba Quraishi
New name Nabiya Qureshi
Daughter- Farhan Qureshi

Office of Ujjain Development Authority

Pradhikaran Bhawan, Bharatpuri Administrative Zone, Dewas Road, Ujjain - 456010

email- udaujain@gmail.com, website- www.udaujain.org

NIT No.: UDA/ET/25/08 Date : 29/01/2025

Notice Inviting Tender

Online tenders are invited on Percentage rate tender on key dates from the Contractor registered under centralized e-registration system in MP PWD. Tender documents can be purchased and details can be seen on website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in>. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of work | SHIFTING OF 33/11 KV & LT LINE ALONG 45.0 METER ROAD (MR-11) FROM TARAMANDAL TO TRIVENI/KSHIPRA VIHAR SCHEME UJJAIN |
| Probable amount of contract (Rs.) | 1424819/- |
| Earnest Money (Rs.) | 28496/- |
| Cost of tender form+ GST (Rs.) | 2360/- |
| Time for completion | 01 Months including rainy season |

(K.C. PATIDAR)
Executive Engineer, UDA, Ujjain

कार्यालय नगर परिषद बडागाँव धसान जिला-टीकमगढ़ (म.प्र.)

क्रमांक/145/न.परि./निर्माण/2025 बडागाँव धसान, दिनांक 28.01.2025

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु केन्द्रीयकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से ऑनलाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।

| क्र. | टेण्डर क्रमांक एवं जारी दिनांक | कार्य का नाम | कार्य की लागत एवं समयावधि | निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य एवं (EMD) | निविदा की अंतिम तिथि |
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1. मध्यप्रदेश शासन नगरीय विकास एवं आवास विभाग मंत्रालय का पत्र क्रं./एफ.237/2024/18-2 भोपाल दिनांक 09.09.2024 प्रभावशील रहेगा जो कि निविदा एवं अनुबंध का भाग है।

नोट :- निविदा से संबंधित किसी भी प्रकार के संशोधन का प्रकाशन ऑनलाईन की वेबसाइट पर ही किया जावेगा पृथक से समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी
नगर परिषद बडागाँव धसान
जिला-टीकमगढ़ (म.प्र.)

मां नर्मदा प्राकट्योत्सव एवं नगर गौरव दिवस

के उपलक्ष्य में मां नर्मदा के सेतनीघाट पर आयोजित कार्यक्रम में पधार रहे मुख्य अतिथि मुख्यमंत्री मान. डॉ. मोहन यादव जी एवं समस्त अतिथिगणों का स्वागत वंदन अभिनंदन

मुख्यमंत्री मान. डॉ. मोहन यादव जी
म.प्र. शासन भोपाल

नगरपालिका परिषद द्वारा किए जा रहे ऐतिहासिक कार्य

- मां नर्मदा लोक कोरीडर का निर्माण
- बस स्टैंड का जीर्णोदर
- फेडरल तालाब का जीर्णोदर
- मौनाबी लोक का सौंदर्यीकरण एवं चौकीकरण
- भोपाल विराहे का सौंदर्यीकरण एवं चौकीकरण
- नर्मदा मलविद्यालय विराहे का सौंदर्यीकरण एवं चौकीकरण
- वाहद्वार नगर में सौरी रोड एवं नाली, प्राक निर्माण कार्य

नगरपालिका परिषद, नर्मदापुरम्

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER-II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL JABALPUR

797/2, Shanti Kunj, South Civil Lines, Jabalpur-482001

NOTICE FOR SETTLING A SALE PROCLAMATION UNDER RULE 53 OF THE SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993

RC/98/2024 21-10-2024

INDIAN BANK
Versus
PARAMJEET SINGH KHANUJA KHANUJA

To (C01) PARAMJEET SINGH KHANUJA KHANUJA PLOT NO 9 AND 10, KHANUJA ENCLAVE, E-9, ARERA COLONY, DIST-BHOPAL (M.P.) 462016 (C02) RAVINDER KAUR KHANUJA, PLOT NO 9 AND 10, KHANUJA ENCLAVE, E-9, ARERA COLONY, DIST-BHOPAL (M.P.) 462016 (C03) SURJEET SINGH KHANUJA, PLOT NO 9 AND 10, KHANUJA ENCLAVE, E-9, ARERA COLONY, DIST-BHOPAL (M.P.) 462016 (C04) PRITAM KAUR, PLOT NO 9 AND 10, KHANUJA ENCLAVE, E-9, ARERA COLONY, DIST-BHOPAL (M.P.) 462016

Whereas you was the order by the Presiding Officer of DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL JABALPUR who had issued the Recovery Certificate dated 05/04/2024 in OA/395/2022 to pay to the Applicant Bank(s)/Financial Institution(s) Name of applicant, the sum of Rs. 5239138 (Rupees Fifty Two Lakhs Thirty Nine Thousands One Hundred Thirty Eight Only) along with pendente lite and future interest @ 12% w.e.f. 23/03/2022 till realization and costs of Rs. 55000 (Rupees Fifty Five Thousands Only), and whereas the said has not been paid, the undersigned has ordered the sale of undermentioned immovable/Immovable property.

2. You are hereby informed that the 04/03/2025 at 10.30 A.M. has been fixed for drawing up the proclamation of sale and settling the terms thereof. You are requested to bring to the notice of the undersigned any encumbrances, charges, claims or liabilities attached to the said properties or any portion thereof.

Specification of property

Immovable Property Plot No.-9, Khanuja Enclave, E-9, Arera Colony, Bhopal. Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: 21/01/2025 Ms. Priiti Desai Recovery Officer-II Debts Recovery Tribunal, Jabalpur

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

Regional office -1st Floor, Sai Baba Complex, Near GDA Building, Phool Bagh, Gwalior Ph. 0751-2423126

POSSESSION NOTICE (Rule 8 (1)) For Immovable Property

The Understanding being the Authorised officer of the Canara Bank Under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, in exercise of the power conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issues a demand notice on below mentioned date to the following Borrowers/Guarantors, calling upon them to repay the amount mentioned in the respective Notice with in 60 days from the date of receipt of said notices. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, Notice is here by given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on dates mentioned below, the borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the properties will be subject to the charge of Canara Bank, for an amount herein below mentioned & Interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provision of Section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

| Name and Address of Borrower/Property owner | Outstanding Amount (Rs.) | Description of the Property |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Branch : Canara Bank, Dal Bazar, Gwalior, Ph. 89899-89135, E-mail : cb0295@canarabank.com Borrower: 1. Sh. Kishore Kant Tyagi S/o Shri Kalicharan Tyagi. Add: 44, Kunj Vihar Colony, Bhind Road, Gole Ka Mandir, Gwalior (M.P.)- 474005 2. Sh. Shyam Kant Tyagi S/o Shri Kalicharan Tyagi. Add: 44, Kunj Vihar Colony, Bhind Road, Gole Ka Mandir, Gwalior (M.P.)- 474005 | Rs.8,11,753.02/- + Interest and Other Expenses - Recovery Demand Notice : 16.10.2024 Possession Date 29.01.2025 | Property Owner- Sh. Kishore Kant Tyagi S/o Shri Kalicharan Tyagi- Emt Of Land And Building Situated At Plot No. 26, Patwari Halka No.94, Part Of Survey No. 149, 150, 152, 153, 154, 156, Village- Lakhmipur, Ward No. 18, Gwalior (M.P.) Boundaries : East -Open Land Others, South- Plot No. 27, West- Main Road, North: Plot No. 25 |
| Branch : Canara Bank, Gole Ka Mandir, Ph. 8448338142, E-mail : cb2897@canarabank.com Borrower: M/s Ganpati Construction Company Prop. Kishore Kant Tyagi S/o Shri Kalicharan Tyagi Add: 44, Kunj Vihar Colony, Bhind Road, Patri Wali Road, Gwalior, (M.P.) - 474005 Guarantor: Ravi Kant Tyagi S/o Kalicharan Tyagi Add: 44, Kunj Vihar Faceone, Gole Ka Mandir, Gwalior, (M.P.) | Rs.44,27,472.68/- + Interest and Other Expenses - Recovery Demand Notice : 17.10.2024 Possession Date 29.01.2025 | Property Owner- Shri Kishore Kant Tyagi & Shri Ravi Kant Tyagi-Property is House Constructed on The Part of Plot No. 44 Kunj Vihar Colony, Face-I Gwalior (M.P.)-474005, Area: 1200 Sq Ft. Boundaries : 1. East - House Constructed On Plot No. 62, South- House Constructed on Plot No. 45, West-Main Road, North- Part of Plot No 44. |

PLACE: GWALIOR DATE : 03/02/2025 AUTHORISED OFFICER CANARA BANK

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

Recovery Section, Circle Office, 7th Floor, Ansal Towers, 38, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019 Phone No. 011-26292604; 26419921

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable / immovable property mortgaged/hypothecated charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on below mentioned dates through E-Auction under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8(6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link 'E-Auction' provided in provider <https://baanknet.com/> (M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd.), (Contact No. 8291220220, Email- Support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com) or Canara Bank's website www.canarabank.com, EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-Wallet of M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (<https://baanknet.com/>) portal directly or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan.

| Sr. No. | Name of the Branch Borrower / Guarantors / Mortgagor Name & Address | DETAILS OF MOVABLE/IMMOVABLE PROPERTY AND STATUS OF POSSESSION | Total Dues | a. Reserve Price (Rs) | | DATE & TIME OF AUCTION (with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes duration each) | The property can be inspected, with Prior Appointment with Authorized Officer & Contact Person |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | b. EMD (Rs) | c. Incremental Bid (Rs) | | |
| 1 | SAM BRANCH DELHI 1. M/S. YOGRAJ INFRASTRUCTURE LTD, Registered Office & Corporate Office: B-63,(Basement), Paschim Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057 2. M/S. YOGRAJ INFRASTRUCTURE LTD, Unit: Village Chawarpata, Tehsil Tendukhera, Dist. Narsingpur, M.P.- 487330 3. SHRI. YOGENDRA SINGH, (Guarantor) B-63,(Basement), Paschim Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057 4. SMT. RITU SINGH, (Guarantor) B-63,(Basement), Paschim Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057 | 3.61 acres of Land along with Shed building in khasra no 226 situated in Village, Chawarpata, Tehsil Tendukhera, Dist Narsingpur, Madhya Pradesh Pin code-487330 in the name of M/s Yograj Infrastructure LTD. Under Physical Possession | Rs. 543,99,12,610.97 as on 31/05/2019 plus further interests & costs | a. 1,40,00,000/- b. 14,00,000/- c. 1,00,000/- d. 01-02-2025 | a. 1,40,00,000/- b. 14,00,000/- c. 1,00,000/- d. 01-02-2025 | 20-02-2025 between 11:30 A.M. to 01:30 PM 17-02-2025 up to 05.00 p.m. | 15.02.2025 at 11:30 am to 3.30 pm. Mr Amit Kumar, Manager (M-879872232), Mr Darshan Kumar Gautam Chief Manager (M- 7735448508) |

Intending bidders may contact for properties during office hours on any working day for other details and inspection of properties.

Date : 03-02-2025, Place : New Delhi

Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

Praggnanandhaa beats Gukesh to clinch Tata Chess title

PTI ■ WIJK AAN ZEE

The Indian juggernaut in international chess remained unstoppable as Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa fought through exhaustion and nerves to defeat world champion D Gukesh in a clash of compatriots to clinch the Tata Steel Masters title for the first time in his prolific career.

The bespectacled 19-year-old from Chennai, a city that has become the cradle of Indian chess, came from behind to upstage the 18-year-old world number three 2-1 in the tiebreaker of the event's 87th edition here on Sunday.

This was after both players ended up tied on 8.5 points after losing their 13th-round games. While Gukesh lost to fellow Indian Arjun Erigaisi, Praggnanandhaa went down to Vincent Keymer of Germany.

In the tie-breaker, there was huge drama typical of two young players looking to win each and every game they played in the tournament as they played the tie-



break.

"I am still shaking, it was such a crazy day. I don't know how to express. I didn't really expect to win. Somehow things went my way," Praggnanandhaa told the official tournament website after his triumph.

Asked if it was the most tense day of his chess career, which began when he was a mere two years of age.

"Today is more special because I won the tournament. Definitely most stressful day," he responded.

The teenager became the first Indian after Viswanathan Anand to win the title. Anand won it thrice (2003, 2004 and 2006) individually when it was called the Corus Chess Tournament, named on the title sponsor of that time. The legend also shared the honours twice (1989 and 1998) in its earliest form of Hoogovens Tournament.

Praggnanandhaa faced the Benoni with reversed colours in the first game of the tie-break and it seemed like he had equalised easily in the middle game. However, Gukesh had other thoughts as he kept trying and won, thanks to a blunder by Praggnanandhaa that cost him a full rook.

In a must-win second game of the tiebreaker, Praggnanandhaa employed the Trompowsky opening, and this time Gukesh could claim a slight advantage with his black pieces.

"I was just trying to relax, to rest a bit. It was a very difficult game. Against Vincent I didn't play anywhere close to the level I was playing here. I should buy something for Arjun. At some point I thought Gukesh was better," the former world youth champion quipped.

"For sure, (this win) it is the highlight. When I came here, I wanted to win but the field was very strong. I didn't really think about it much until yesterday," he added.

"I am completely exhausted. I was also quite tired. I just want to get some rest now."

During the tie-break, by just keeping his position together, Praggnanandhaa patiently waited and capitalised on an unforced

Buttler praises Abhishek Sharma's innings

PTI ■ MUMBAI

England captain Jos Buttler has heaped high praise on Abhishek Sharma for smashing a whirlwind 54-ball 135 in India's 150-run win in the fifth T20I here, describing the record knock as one of the finest examples of "clean ball striking".

Abhishek entered record books with the second fastest T20I century by an Indian batter off 37 balls and hit 13 sixes -- the most in an innings for any player from the country, powering the hosts to 247 for nine.

"Yeah, (we are) obviously disappointed (with the result), they (India) played a fantastic batting innings. I think credit to Abhishek Sharma, I thought that's as clean a ball striking as I've seen, I thought he played fantastically well," Buttler told the media after India recorded their second biggest T20I win by runs on Sunday.

Buttler denied England were "shellshocked" from Abhishek's onslaught on his bowlers but said there were only two options for his side -- either to go boom or bust.

"We always sit down and think



what more could we have done or how we could have stopped him, but some days I think you have to give a lot of credit to the opposition, I thought he played brilliantly well," Buttler said.

"Shellshocked's not quite the word, I think. It can be difficult sometimes when a player gets on a roll and they play as well as he did," Buttler said.

"Looking back at the last IPL, him and Travis Head were the same at the top of the order for Sunrisers (Hyderabad) and obviously he's brought that into India."

"He (Abhishek) played a brilliant innings and sometimes you want to credit

"The way Phil Salt went out there and struck the ball, it was obviously a really good wicket, you needed someone to go with him and one or two guys to catch fire and that's the way you're going to chase that down."

"Like I said, you either get quite close in games like this and surprise yourselves or it doesn't work but, no, we certainly won't change the way we want to play. We need to, you know, keep backing that, be even more committed and you're desperate to do well and execute that," he said.

Buttler said he wouldn't want England to change their style of play after a 1-4 series loss to India.

"We've had our moments actually in all the games bar the first one probably and today. We had moments in Chennai, Pune and obviously the game we won in Rajkot," he said.

"As we got more experienced, more committed to the style we want to play and the nuances of the game of how we're going to win those moments, then (we would) go on to win the match and win series," he added.



CT 2025 Trophy tour concludes in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The trophy tour for the ICC Champions Trophy concluded in India with the coveted prize touring cities of Mumbai and Bengaluru ahead of the tournament beginning February 19.

The upcoming edition of the eight-team 50-overs tournament will be held in Pakistan and Dubai from February 19 to March 9.

"The Trophy Tour has covered all eight participating nations during its global journey and, with the conclusion of India leg, it will now travel to its final stop in Pakistan," the ICC said in a statement on Monday.

The tour in Mumbai included trophy's visits to the Wankhede Stadium, Shivaji Park, the Gateway of India, Carter Road, historic Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, and Bandstand among other locations.

It was also displayed during the celebrations to mark the completion of 50 years of the Wankhede Stadium.

In Bengaluru, the trophy visited venues including Nexus Shantiniketan Mall, Bengaluru Palace, Freedom Park, KR Market, Town Hall, St Mary's Basilica, M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Church Street and Vidyarthi Bhavan.

Bevan inducted to Cricket Australia's Hall of Fame

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former batter Michael Bevan, widely regarded as one of the greatest ODI finishers who displayed impeccable game awareness and mastered difficult run chases with minimal risk, has been inducted to Cricket Australia's Hall of Fame.

The 54-year-old, who was a part of Australia's 1999 and 2003 World Cup-winning teams, made 6912 ODI runs at a brilliant average of 53.58 in 232 games, batting in middle-order, mostly at number six.

During his career that ran from 1994 to 2004, Bevan exemplified maximum returns at minimum risk, and was a genius in keeping the required rate during chases in check by picking singles and twos that would often lull the opposition and ultimately steer Australia over the line.

"Congratulations to former Australian player Michael Bevan on his induction to the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame," Cricket Australia posted on X.

Speaking to 'cricket.Com.Au', the imposing left-hander, who has also dabbled in coaching, said his ODI success was down to a deep understanding of the format.

"When I reflect on my one-day career, and get an understanding of why I performed like I did, how I was able to manage the innings, or the run rate...I think that was sort of natural to me," he said.

"Minimising risk,

We want to play high-risk, high-reward cricket in T20s: Gambhir

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India head coach Gautam Gambhir said the team is ready to push the barriers in T20 Internationals with the adoption of a fresh "high-risk, high-reward" approach, and the target is now "to get 250-260 regularly" in the format.

That shift in mindset was evident in India's 4-1 mauling of England in the just-concluded five-match series.

In the fourth T20I at Pune, India kept attacking England despite losing wickets to eventually set a match-winning 181 for 9, and at Mumbai on Sunday, the hosts raced to 247 for 9, their fourth highest total in this format.

"That's the kind of T20 cricket we want to play. We don't want to fear losing a game of cricket. We want to play high-risk, high-reward cricket.



And these guys have adopted that ideology really well," Gambhir told the host broadcaster after the match on Sunday.

Gambhir said they are looking to post tall totals in the vicinity of 250 in every game, and he doesn't mind getting out for a low score in some matches while attempting to achieve the task.

"We want to try and get to 250-260 regularly. And in trying to do that, there'll be games where we'll get bundled out for 120-130. And that is what T20 cricket is all about.

"Unless and until you don't play that high-risk cricket, you won't get those big rewards as well. Most importantly, I think we're on the right track. Come those big tournaments, we want to

continue playing this way and we don't want to fear losing anything," he added.

"I think the ideology of this T20 team is based on selflessness and fearlessness, and I think in the last six months, these guys have done it day in, day out."

Gambhir used the breathtaking 54-ball 135 of Abhishek Sharma to further validate his point.

"We want to keep backing players like Abhishek Sharma. We have to be patient with these boys. I haven't seen a better T20 hundred against bowlers who are bowling at 140-150 kph consistently," he added.

Gambhir also lauded spinner Varun Chakravarthi for reinventing himself and coming back stronger to international cricket.

"I think his transformation from IPL to international T20 cricket has been phenomenal. This series was probably the benchmark as well because England is a high-quality side. They've got some really quality cricketers and the kind of surfaces we've played on - I think they were fantastic batting wickets and the way he's bowled those tough overs has been phenomenal," said Gambhir.

Chakravarthi was the highest wicket-taker in the series with 14 scalps at an average of 9.85 and economy rate of 7.66.

There were talks about rifts in the Indian dressing room after the team's disastrous outing in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series against Australia.

Gambhir said everything will fall in place once the team returns to winning ways.

"They (these players) have played a lot of cricket against each other. That's all Indian cricket is all about us."

"When results start going your way, everything goes well. Our players know what it means to represent 140-150 crore Indians," he added.

On the controversy surrounding Harshit Rana coming in as a concussion sub for Shivam Dube in the previous match at Pune, Gambhir said rather lightly: "He (Dube) probably bowled four overs today."

Head wins Allan Border medal, Sutherland receives Belinda Clark honour

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Star batter Travis Head was named the winner of the prestigious Allan Border Medal for the top Australian men's cricketer, while young all-rounder Annabel Sutherland was awarded the Belinda Clark Medal at the Australian Cricket Awards held here on Monday.

Head, who had an outstanding year across all three formats with 1,427 runs since the start of the polling period, received 208 votes to secure the top honour, surpassing Josh Hazlewood (158 votes) and Pat Cummins (147 votes).

"Pretty hard to believe. It's been a good year. Very pleased I've been able to fit in, do a role, and lucky I've been able to play all formats. It's a nice accomplishment, and I'll enjoy it," Head said in a recorded interview from Galle.

The 31-year-old Head also took home the Men's ODI



(143 votes) and Beth Mooney (115 votes) to win the Belinda Clark Medal.

"Pretty surreal. To win an award named after Belinda Clark is pretty special," said



Hazlewood taking 30 wickets at just 13.16 in Tests against the West Indies, New Zealand, and India. Young cricketer Sam Konstas, who made an impressive debut at 19 during

the Boxing Day Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India, was named Young Cricketer of the Year. Konstas scored 113 runs across the last two Tests, including a memorable 60 off 65 balls on debut.

He became an instant sensation after he took down star India pacer Jasprit Bumrah, who had been a menace to Australian batters throughout the five-Test series, which Australia ultimately won 3-1.

Though the award night was devoid of the stars, as they were busy in the ongoing Test series in Sri Lanka, allrounder Mitchell Marsh stole the spotlight with a hilarious Bumrah anecdote that had the audience in stitches at the Crown Casino here.

"My little nephew, Ted, is four years old. We played backyard cricket the other day, and he came in with Bumrah's action... And the nightmare continues," Marsh joked.

In other awards, Ashleigh Gardner was named Women's ODI Player of the Year after finishing as Australia's leading run-scorer in the format with 385 runs. Beth Mooney was crowned Women's T20 Player of the Year for the third time, having scored 618 runs during the voting period.

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa won Men's T20I Player of the Year after taking 35 wickets in 21 T20Is, edging out Head by three votes. Cameron Green was awarded the Community Impact Award for his efforts in raising awareness about kidney disease.

The award ceremony also saw Michael Clarke, Michael Bevan, and Christina Matthews inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame.

Other awardees included Beau Webster and Georgia Voll, who won Men's and Women's Domestic Player of the Year, and Chloe Ainsworth, who was named Young Cricketer of the Year. Glenn Maxwell and Cooper Connolly were named joint winners of the BBL Player of the Tournament, while Ellyse Perry and Jess Jonassen shared the WBBL Player of the Tournament award.