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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

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 of 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 this order.

## WEATHER

AQI 286  
MAX 24.1°C(+2.1)  
MIN 10.2°C(+1.6)

Stage III of GRAP had been implemented in Delhi on January 31, after a significant deterioration in air quality due to calm winds and smog, which caused the Air Quality Index (AQI) to spike to 365. "Delhi's average AQI has significantly improved as the AQI of the day clocked 286 today as per the AQI Bulletin provided by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), clearly indicating a downward trend.



## 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



(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

Vedic chants with melodic flute and resonant cello, creating a reflective soundscape that fosters mindfulness, self-discovery, and connection. This harmonious blend of Indian classical music, New Age

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





# U'khand weightlifter wins bronze at National Games

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand athlete Vivek Pandey secured a bronze medal in the men's 109+ kilogramme weight category weightlifting at the 38th National Games on Monday. This achievement is particularly noteworthy as Uttarakhand did not compete in this category during the previous National Games. Pandey, who hails from Tanakpur in the Champawat district, began weightlifting two years ago.

Sports minister Rekha Arya highlighted the significance of this accomplishment and congratulated Pandey for this. He said, "Raising one's level so high with just two years of practice is a remarkable feat. It showcased the passion, determination and dedication of this athlete." She further added that Pandey's success has provided a new identity to the state's weightlifting sector and will inspire more youth in Uttarakhand to pursue the sport.

Pandey credited his parents and coach for his success. He said, "I started weightlifting two years ago and my coaches



played a significant role in my development. I give full credit for this achievement to my parents."

Additionally, at the 38th National Games competitions taking place in Uttarakhand, head constable Lavish Kumar from the Pauri Police also

achieved success by winning a bronze medal in the men's 85 kilogramme Wushu category. Regarding this, Senior Superintendent of Police of Pauri, Lokeshwar Singh, congratulated Kumar on his accomplishment and extended his best wishes for continued success in the future.

# UVSP instructs CEOs to act against students caught cheating in board examination

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The secretary of the Uttarakhand Vidyalaya Shiksha Parishad (UVSP), Vinod Simalti has instructed the Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of all districts to take direct action against students identified as cheating during the Class X and XII board examinations. He said this while discussing the preparations for the board examinations of class X and XII under the UVSP framework.

Simalti said that the UVSP has made arrangements to ensure the successful conduct of board examinations in all dis-

tricts. He said that this year, the written examinations for these classes are scheduled to begin on February 21 and will continue till March 11. Additionally, practical examinations for the respective classes began in the schools across all districts, running from January 16 to February 15.

He informed that the practical examinations for classes X and XII were conducted under the UVSP, with an average of 19 subjects involved. He informed that for class X, there will be 111,420 institutional candidates and 2,268 individual candi-

dates, resulting in a total of 113,688 candidates. In class XII, the numbers are higher, with 1,052,298 institutional candidates and 4,401 individual candidates, leading to a total of 1,096,699 candidates. The examinations will be held at 1,245 centres throughout the state, which include 165 sensitive centres and 5 highly sensitive centres. Additionally, he said that 13 main collection centres and 26 sub-collection centres have been established across the state.

Simalti further added that the admit cards for the examination have not

yet been issued to the students. He said that these admit cards would be distributed one week prior to the start of the examinations. Additionally, he stated that two teachers would be present to supervise each examination room at the centres during this period.

Simalti said that, in order to ensure the success of the board examinations, a meeting was recently held with the chief executive officers of all districts within the state. He said that all CEOs have been instructed to guarantee that the examinations

are conducted without any instances of cheating and to maintain a peaceful environment in every district. They have been directed to uphold fairness at all examination centres and to prevent any form of negligence. Further, he underscored the significance of securing the question papers at each examination centre, which must be monitored by the centre administrators and custodians.

# Blood bank's construction starts at district hospital

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Following the laying of the foundation stone by Health minister Dhan Singh Rawat, the construction of the blood bank at Deen Dayal Upadhyay district hospital has officially commenced on the hospital premises. Rawat, accompanied by district magistrate Savin Bansal, laid the foundation stone for the blood bank and also inaugurated the ASHA Ghar.

Regarding the current progress of the blood bank, the medical superintendent of the hospital Dr VS Chauhan stated that the construction work began following the foundation stone ceremony. The blood bank is being constructed in proximity to the hospital's oxygen plant. Further, he said that the State administration has allocated a

budget of Rs 1.42 crore for the establishment of the blood bank.

He said that the construction of the blood bank is projected to be completed by December 2025. It has been stated that the establishment of this facility will eliminate the need for patients and hospital staff to spend time searching for blood at other hospitals, as it will be readily available within the district hospital. The creation of the blood bank is anticipated to be beneficial for both patients and the hospital administration, he said.

It will be recalled that, following the directive of the DM the hospital administration has submitted a proposal for the

blood bank to the State administration, which was approved recently. Further, the state administration has issued a tender for the construction of the blood bank to Peyjal Nigam. Additionally, the blood bank will re-

quire 2,000 square feet of land by regulatory guidelines. However, given the limited space available at the district hospital, the blood bank will be constructed across two floors.

# 23 women get permits for CNG-fuelled auto rickshaws

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Transport department in Dehradun has issued permits for CNG-fuelled auto rickshaws to 23 women for the first time in Uttarakhand. These women have until March 30 to purchase their auto rickshaws after which they can begin operations upon completing all necessary documentation, the regional transport officer (Administration) of the Dehradun division Sunil Sharma said. He stated that the department has been prioritising the issuance of new permits for clean-fuel public vehicles, not only to promote environmentally friendly transportation but also to encourage women's participation in a traditionally male-dominated field. Out of the 250 CNG auto rickshaw

permits issued in Dehradun, 75 were allocated to women. However, out of these, only 23 women will be driving their own auto rickshaws. "This may seem like a small number to some but it is a significant milestone. For the first time, so many women in Dehradun have shown interest in operating a public transport vehicle as a full time profession. These 23 women, mostly between the ages of 20 and 30, are determined to work in this sector and we will provide them with all possible support," Sharma said. He added that the department will assist these women in securing loans for purchasing their vehicles and provide guidance on operating within specific routes or affiliating with auto-

rickshaw unions. Besides this, the department is considering sharing the details of these women drivers with educational institutions to ensure they can get some potential regular passengers. Many parents, particularly those with daughters, prefer reliable transportation for their children. Now, they will have the option to hire female drivers for pick-up and drop-off services, Sharma said. "Once these women complete all necessary formalities by March 30, we will initiate this process. We are committed to supporting them as much as possible. We also hope to see a similar response in other cities, such as Haridwar and Rishikesh and the department is working towards it," he added.

# DM addresses complaints at Janta Milan

PNS ■ NEW TEHRI

The district magistrate, Tehri Mayur Dixit heard out the people's complaints at the Janta Milan programme held here on Monday. Most of the complaints lodged on this occasion related to rehabilitation and several departments, including the Public Works Department and Child Welfare Department.

One from Pratapnagar complained about illegal occupation of his land by someone else on which the DM directed SDM Pratapnagar to take necessary action and inform him. Another villager from Ghera requested the DM to ensure that an embankment is built to protect his house from being damaged due to the construction of a motor road. The DM directed action on this matter, too.

On this occasion, DM reviewed the pending complaints registered in CM Helpline and directed the officials concerned to resolve these expeditiously.

## IN BRIEF

### Water level in Naini Lake shows stability

**NAINITAL:** The water level of Naini Lake is currently stable at 6 feet 3 inches which is around the normal level. Stating this, a senior engineer of the district Irrigation department D ID Sati said that the water level of the lake is being monitored regularly and all necessary steps are being taken to maintain it. Notably, in February last year too, the water level of the lake stood at 6 feet 3 inches. The local administration hopes that there will not be much change in the water level in the coming days.

### Week-long Pulse Anaemia campaign inaugurated

**UTTARKASHI:** Under the 'Anaemia Mukta Bharat' programme, the week-long Pulse Anaemia Maha Abhiyan was inaugurated in Uttarkashi on Monday. While inaugurating it at the district hospital, the district magistrate Meherban Singh Bisht urged the health workers to work with commitment to make the campaign a success. He also asked the pregnant women to consume food items rich in iron and vitamin B such as green leafy vegetables, eggs, pulses and whole grains to prevent anaemia. Further, he directed the chief medical officer (CMO) and other health workers to ensure that sufficient numbers of haemoglobin meters along with essential life-saving medicines are stocked in all medical units. Speaking on the occasion, the CMO Dr B S Rawat informed that during the campaign, the haemoglobin level of all registered pregnant women would be tested. If the level was found low they would be given an injection of iron source under the supervision of doctors at the district hospital, community health centres and primary health centres, he said, adding that till date, 4742 pregnant women had been registered in the district whose haemoglobin levels would be tested during the campaign.



The pedestrian overbridge at Tehsil Chowk in Dehradun, inaugurated in 2015 remains locked after considerable expenses as pedestrians walk across the road and the structure remains a base for advertisements **Mangesh Kumar/Pioneer photo**

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE		
Sr.DEN/III/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against following tender bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand Draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.		
Tender No. Date	320-DRM-MB-24-25 Date 31.01.2025	318-DRM-MB-24-25 Date 31.01.2025
Name of Work	Widening and standardisation of cess in KM 1284-1381 including cess repair at vulnerable locations and bridge approaches under ADE/BE	Pre & Post stamping track measurement survey using GEDO Vorsys trolley system in the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN-III/MB.
Tender Closing Date Time	25.02.2025 16:00	17.02.2025 16:00
Advertised Value (Rs.)	24998972.78	69,63,840.00
Earnest Money (Rs.)	275000.00	1,39,300.00
Bidding Start Date	11.02.2025	03.02.2025
Validity of Offer (Days)	60 Days	20 Days
Period of Completion	8 months	8 months
No. 75-W/2/3/WA/Publication DATED : 31.01.2025 372/2025		
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Loan Account No. / Name and Address of the account Borrower(s), Co-Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s)	Date of Demand Notice	Amount due as per Demand Notice
1. Loan Account No. - ABN_GTL_0000077769 M/s India Metal Corp. Through Proprietor, 1488 TO 504 A3, Friends Colony, GT Road Industrial Area, New Delhi-110095, 2. Mrs. Niti Bansal, B-106, Near Nehru Park, Surya Nagar, Chander Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh- 201011, 3. M/s. Sri T M Enterprises, Through Proprietor, Near By East Delhi Medical Hospital, Ground Floor, Property No. 550/A, Plot No. 6A, Mansarovar Park, Shahdara, New Delhi-110032, 4. Mr. Manu Bansal, B-106, Near Nehru Park, Surya Nagar, Chander Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh- 201011 All also at Apartment No- A801, Block A, Whispering Willows, 174 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand-248195	21.01.2025 NPA Date 03-Jan-2025	Rs. 1,51,32,715.91/- (Rupees One Crore Fifty-One Lakh Thirty-Two Thousand Seven Hundred Fifteen and Ninety-One Paise Only) as on 15.01.2025

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Date : 04.02.2025, Place : Dehradun Authorised Officer, Aditya Birla Finance Limited

The general public is informed that I have changed my name from DUSHYANT KUMAR to DUSHYANT KUMAR YADAV and in future I should be known as Dushyant Kumar Yadav S/O- Rajendra Singh Flat No- P/2/2A-25 Deep Ganga Apartment Sector 5A IIE SIDCUL Roshnabad Kacheri Haridwar

The general public is informed that I have changed my name from SACHIN to SACHIN BHARDWAJ and in future I should be known as Sachin Bhardwaj S/O Om Prakash Bhardwaj Address:- Santpura, Hanuman Garhi Kankhal Haridwar Pin :249408.

मेरे पिता का नाम मेरे झाड़विंग लाइसेंस में वृद्धिवा रघुवीर सिंह तोमर दर्ज है। जजिक उनका वास्तविक नाम रघुवीर सिंह है। सो लाइसेंस में पिता का नाम सही किया जाना न्यायोचित होगा। प्रवीन तोमर, लक्सियार, देहरादून।

मेरे पुत्र के आधार कार्ड नं 917627024873 में उसका नाम कपिलेश दर्ज है। लेकिन निजी कारणों से मैंने अपने पुत्र का नाम कपिलेश से बदलकर हृदय गहलोट (HRIDAY GAHLOT) कर लिया है। भविष्य में मेरे पुत्र को हृदय गहलोट (HRIDAY GAHLOT) S/O गौरव KUMAR के नाम से जाना पहचाना व पुकारा जाए। निवासी-गणेश अपार्टमेंट शिमला बाईपास रोड श्रद्धा एन्वेलव सेवला कला माजरा देहरादून उत्तराखण्ड।

मेरे पति के सैन्य अभिलेखोंनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम मानी देवी दर्ज है। सही नाम मानी आचार नं. 918935846026 W/O आर्मी नं. 16022443K नायक जोगा राम, ग्राम-निम्बल कोट, पोस्ट- निम्बल कोट, तह- गुडमालानी, जिला-बांडेरा, राजस्थान-344033 है।

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Sanjeev Kumar, S/o Shri Kaish Chandra, and Reena Aggarwal, W/o Sanjeev Kumar, residents of Vasant Vihar Enclave, Dehradun, hereby inform that my land measuring 370.413 square meters, located at Khaska No. 241, Village Kawaii, Pargana Pachhwa Doon, District Dehradun, is owned by my wife, Reena Aggarwal. This property is recorded in the original registered documents as a sale deed in Book No. 1, Page No. 383, DFB No., Vol 929, Pages 991 to 1010, Serial No. 366, registered on 25.01.2000, with its registration at the Sub-Registrar Office, Dehradun. This document has been lost. A missing complaint regarding this document has been lodged at Vasant Vihar Police Station, Dehradun, on 02.02.2025 (G.D. No. 34/17-39). Through this notice, it is informed that if any person or organization has any claim or objection regarding this property or documents, they must submit their claim within 7 days of this publication. If no objections are received within 7 days, any subsequent claims will not be considered valid. If anyone finds this document, please contact the address mentioned above.

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

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

**भारतीय स्टेट बैंक State Bank of India AMCC, Bageshwar Uttarakhand**  
हर भारतीय का बैंक The Banker to Every Indian

**POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)**  
[Under Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Whereas The undersigned being the authorized officer of the STATE BANK OF INDIA, DANGOLI, BAGESHWAR under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 18/11/2024 Calling upon the borrower Sh. DHYAN SINGH S/O DALIP SINGH R/O VIII. SIMKHET, BAGESHWAR & Guarantor Sh. Jeevan Chandra Pandey S/o Sh. Bhawani Dutt Pandey resident of Jwala Devi Ward, Bageshwar to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being CC LIMIT aggregate Rs. 26,65,253.43/-(Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Two Hundred Fifty three and forty three Paise) plus accrued interest thereon with effect from 30.10.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

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

The borrower in particular and public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the State Bank of India, Dangoli, Bageshwar for an amount being Rs.26,65,253.40/-(Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Two Hundred Fifty three and forty three Paise only) plus accrued interest thereon and other charges with effect from 30.10.2024.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY:**  
khata No. 33 (Old khata no 32), Basarah No 52, Khet No. 342 Madhey (0.005 Hect), VIII Majiyakhet Patwari Kshetra Talaa Katur, Tehsil & Distt-Bageshwar.  
Date : 29.01.2025  
Place : Bageshwar

**AUTHORISED OFFICER STATE BANK OF INDIA**





# U'khand receives Rs 4,641 crore in Railway budget

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand received Rs 4,641 crore in the Railway budget 2025-26 that marks a reduction from the Rs 5,131 crore received in the previous fiscal year. During a video Press conference on Monday, the Union Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnav expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for allocating Rs 2.52 lakh crore to the country's railway sector in the 2025-26 budget.

He said that Uttarakhand has been allocated Rs 4,641 crore that aims to strengthen the railway network across the State. He said that the Rishikesh-Karnaprayag rail project is one of the central government's ambitious pro-



jects which is being built with a total budget of Rs 24,659 crore. He informed that 49 per cent of the 125 kilometre project has been completed. He also said that 96 per cent of the work of Deoband-Roorkee

rail line is also complete.

This 27.5 kilometre railway project is being built at a cost of Rs 1,053 crore. Besides this, 63 kilometre Kichha-Khatima rail line will also be built at a

cost of Rs 228 crores.

He said that between 2014 and 2025, 69 kilometres of new railway tracks have been laid in Uttarakhand. Besides this, 303 kilometres of railway lines have been electrified during this period and at present, every railway line in the State is electrified, he said. Vaishnav said that 11 railway stations, including Dehradun, Haridwar Junction, Harrawala, Kashipur Junction, Kathgodam, Kichha, Kotdwar, Lalkuan Junction, Ramnagar, Roorkee and Tanakpur, are being developed as Amrit Stations at a cost of Rs 147 crore. Talking about railway safety, he informed that the Kavach system has also been recommended for 49 route kilometres in the State.

# Uttarakhand ranked 23rd in road accident statistics

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand ranks 23rd in the country in terms of road accident statistics and about 80 per cent of accidents occur in Dehradun, Haridwar, Udham Singh Nagar and Nainital districts. The Dehradun senior superintendent of police Ajai Singh said during the official inauguration of 35th Road Safety Month at the Police Line here on Monday. He said that in 2024 alone, the country recorded 1.8 lakh deaths due to road accidents, with nearly 30,000 of these fatalities attributed to the absence of helmets. According to him, 66 per cent of those who lost their lives in road accidents were between the ages of 18 and 34 years. Singh said that Uttarakhand has also witnessed a steady increase in road accidents, with expert



studies revealing that nearly 90 per cent of these incidents result from human negligence. Rash driving, speeding, driving in the wrong direction, overtaking, overloading and driving under the influence of alcohol are among the primary causes

of accidents. According to official data, Uttarakhand records an average of four road accidents daily, resulting in three fatalities and five injuries. The State ranks 23rd in the country in terms of road accident statistics, the SSP said. He stated

that to curb road accidents, the Police department has planned a series of awareness and enforcement activities throughout Road Safety Month. "This year, the campaign will focus on raising awareness among the youth, with initiatives such as street plays and various public engagement programmes aimed at educating citizens about traffic rules and road safety. Dehradun police will conduct a series of workshops and lectures across schools, colleges and higher educational institutions from February 3 to February 15," he said. The police also destroyed 180 modified silencers, which had been seized by police during inspections.

# Dhami continues trend to woo Uttarakhandis in Delhi

## Adopts two-pronged strategy to target AAP government & woo Delhi voters

GAJENDRA SINGH NEGI ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami justified his status as star campaigner of Bharatiya Janata Party in the high intensity election campaign for Delhi Assembly which ended on Monday. In the campaign trail, Dhami addressed as many as 24 public meetings and held roadshows in support of BJP

engine government and targeting AAP for its corrupt government in Delhi. The Uttarakhand CM highlighted implementation of UCC, enactment of stringent anti-copying law, anti-riot act and law against religious conversions as achievements of his government in his campaign in Delhi. Dhami claimed that

# Congress questions CM's electoral engagements in Delhi

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Congress has criticised chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami for getting too engrossed in the election campaign for elections of Delhi Assembly.

The chief spokesperson of Uttarakhand Congress Garima Dasauni said that the State is paying the price for the busy election campaign schedule of CM Dhami. She said that after last year's Lok Sabha elections it is observed that the Uttarakhand CM spends considerable time in the election bound states to campaign for the BJP candidates. Dasauni said that in such a situation, the interests of the State are being compromised. She said that the 38th National Games are currently underway in the State and the administration's apathy is clearly visible in their organisation. Dasauni said that the hosting of the National Games was a golden opportunity for the State for its branding but the offi-

cial apathy and slackness has marred this prospect. She said that the long absence of CM is taking a toll on monitoring of developmental activities. "The focus of CM should be on the development works, follow up of the schemes which are underway and welfare of the people of the State but CM is consistently discharging his duty as star campaigner in other States which is taking a toll on the State," she said.

Dasauni said that the viral video of Vikasnagar MLA Munna Singh Chauhan in which he is talking about illegal mining clearly shows that the mafia is openly engaged in illegal digging of rivers of the State. She said that it is not the first time that any leader of the ruling party has raised this issue. Dasauni said that former CM Trivendra Singh Rawat had also raised the issue of illegal mining in River Ganga in the parliament.



candidates in different areas of Delhi which is the highest number by any of the chief ministers of the BJP ruled states of the country.

In an attempt to woo an estimated 40 lakh people of Uttarakhand origin, the BJP fielded Dhami as its star campaigner for the Delhi Assembly elections. The party tried to cash on his image which got a boost recently after Uttarakhand became the first State in the country to implement the uniform civil code (UCC) for its residents.

In the public meetings and road shows, Dhami adopted a two-pronged strategy to target the Aam Aadmi Party government of Delhi and to woo the voters. The strategy involved listing benefits of a double

Uttarakhand is moving on the path of development at a fast pace due to the support of Narendra Modi led government at centre. In the public meetings he exhorted the people to vote for a double engine government in Delhi elections. Dhami consistently attacked the Arvind Kejriwal led AAP government for being involved in a series of scams ranging from excise, education, purchase of buses and installation of street lights. He also targeted Kejriwal for failing to fulfil his promise of cleaning Yamuna in the last 11 years. Holding Kejriwal responsible for pollution in Yamuna, Dhami told people of Delhi that Yamuna is clean in its entire stretch in Uttarakhand but becomes so polluted in Delhi that its water is not even fit for irrigation purposes.

# Pulse anaemia mega campaign launched in Uttarakhand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Health minister Dhan Singh Rawat launched the pulse anaemia mega campaign in Dehradun on Monday. Addressing a programme organised at the launch of the campaign at the Ayushman Arogya Mandir, Raipur on Monday, Rawat said that the objective of the campaign is to set up a concrete framework to reduce maternal mortality rate, improving the health of mothers and reducing the instances of anaemia in the pregnant women in the State. He expressed hope that the campaign will help in creating awareness in the local society and making the health of pregnant women better.

all the health workers, doctors, ANMs, eligible beneficiaries and society to play an active role in the campaign. He opined that the collective effort will take the State forward on the path of becoming healthy and prosperous.

The minister also distributed nutrition kits to the pregnant women on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the deputy chairperson of rural health and monitoring council, Suresh Bhatt said that the campaign is a major initiative in the direction of improving the health of pregnant women of the State. He said that the campaign will ensure a positive change in maternal and infant health.

The minister informed that the campaign will work on T-4 strategy of test, talk, treat and track.

He said the screening test of all the pregnant women will be done under the campaign. Similarly consultancy on pre-

Mission director National Health Mission, Swati S Bhadauria said that the campaign is being organised in 1,874 screening centres and 165 health centres across the State

# Rain forecast again in the mountains, plains to remain warm and dry

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Even as the temperatures continue to remain above normal in most parts of the State, the State Meteorological Centre has yet again forecast rain in various part of the State. The centre has forecast that light to moderate rainfall is likely to occur at many places in Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudrapur, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar and very light to light rainfall is likely to occur

likely to occur in Tehri, Dehradun, Pauri, Almora, Nainital, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts.

The provisional State capital Dehradun is forecast to witness a partly to generally cloudy sky with the possibility of very light to light rain accompanied with thunder/lightning. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be about 24 degrees Celsius and eight degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun today. The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in various parts of the State on Monday were 25 degrees Celsius and 8.5



degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun, Pauri, Almora, Nainital, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts on Tuesday. The State Meteorological Centre has also issued a yellow warning (Watch) regarding the possibility of thunder with lightning

at a few places in Tehri, Dehradun, Pauri, Almora, Nainital, Champawat and Udham Singh Nagar districts on Tuesday. The State Meteorological Centre has also issued a yellow warning (Watch) regarding the possibility of thunder with lightning



vention of anaemia and nutrition with emphasis on eating iron rich food products and vitamin C and focus on timely treatment (iron therapy and blood transfusion) will be done in the campaign which will also include regular monitoring and follow up. In the programme the minister exhorted

and it will culminate on February 10.

Country head Bhutan, World Health Organisation, Bhupendri Kaur Olakh emphasised on increasing awareness about anaemia, nutrition education and adopting a healthy life style.

# Bhatt raises low wages issue of Uttarakhand Asha workers in Parliament

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Rajya Sabha MP and the Bharatiya Janata Party State president Mahendra Bhatt brought the issue of wage hikes for the State's Asha workers to the forefront in the parliament. During the budget session, he said that several State governments provide annual incentives to Asha workers but Uttarakhand remains the only State where they receive Rs

5,000 annually. He highlighted this critical matter in the Zero Hour discussion in the Lok Sabha, drawing the House's attention to the functioning of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the indispensable role of Asha workers in it. Bhatt urged the central government to include Asha workers under the Minimum Wages Act. He said

that Asha workers play a crucial role in raising awareness about health and social determinants in both rural and urban populations. He stated that these workers are instrumental in delivering maternal and child healthcare services along with various other health related activities. Expressing concern over their wages, Bhatt criticised the fact that despite

their significant contributions, Asha workers are still deprived of a minimum wage. He said that they receive only Rs 4,500 per month as an incentive, which is disproportionately low considering their responsibilities. He appealed to the government to recognise and honour the contributions of Asha workers in the healthcare sector.

Zonal Office, Dehradun: Mahavir Tower, St. Jude's Crossing, Shimla Bypass Road, Seva Kalan, Dist. Dehradun - 248171 Tel No. - 0135-2640046, 2641002, Email: Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in		E-AUCTION NOTICE			
<b>"APPENDIX-IV-A" (See proviso to rule 8(6)) Sale notice for sale of Immovable/Movable property</b>					
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable/Movable Assets Under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002					
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 properties Hypothecated / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive/Physical/Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of Bank of India, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is, Without Recourse" Basis. For detailed terms and condition of sale, please refer to the link provided in (a) <a href="https://www.bankofindia.co.in/b">https://www.bankofindia.co.in/b</a> and (b) <a href="https://www.ebkray.in">https://www.ebkray.in</a> .					
DATE OF INSPECTION OF THE ASSETS	LAST DATE AND TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS ON OR BEFORE	DATE AND TIME OF E AUCTION			
06.03.2025	Date : 07.03.2025 to 09.03.2025 upto 04.00 PM by ONLINE	Date : 10.03.2025 from 11.00 AM onwards till 05.00 PM with unlimited extensions of 10 Minutes duration			
From 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM with concerned Branch					
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor/ Mortgagor	Description of Immovable/Movable Assets	Demand Notice Date	Name of Auth. Officer/ Phone No./ Email I.D	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increment Value
1.	Branch: Roorkee Borrower: Vipin Kumar S/o Jagdish Prasad	Land & Building admeasuring 139.54 square meter in name of Mr. Vipin Kumar S/o Jagdish Prasad and Mr. Narendra Sharma S/o Jagdish Prasad situated at House Old No. 252 New No. 322, Mohalla Gujjarwala Landhaura, Roorkee, Haridwar- 247667	28.03.2024 Rs. 17,30,000/- +UCI+other legal expenses incurred	Mr. Prashant Kumar Phone No. 8085434898 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 36,00,000/- Rs. 3,60,000/- Rs. 10,000/-
2.	Branch: Roorkee Borrower: Sohan Singh S/o Hari Chand	Residential property (House) situated at village Tikaula Kilan Narsan Kalan Roorkee Uttarakhand 247670 admeasuring total plot area 1667.46 square feet, 154.97 square meter & total covered area 964.40 square feet as per the sale deed no. 1552 dated 08.04.2015 tehsil Roorkee District Haridwar, Uttarakhand.	15.05.2022 Rs. 16,22,015.07 +UCI+other legal expenses incurred	Mr. Prashant Kumar Phone No. 8085434898 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 21,84,432/- Rs. 2,18,443/- Rs. 10,000/-
3.	Branch: Haldwani Borrower: Jai Durga Traders Proprietor Dinesh Rawat S/o Bachi Singh Rawat	Residential House situated at village talla Tehsil Haldwani Distt Nainital at Khasra no. 109 min, khatali no. 00062 Update Khata Khatoni no. 00074 in the name of Dinesh Rawat S/o Bachi Singh Rawat. Bounded as under: East: Land of Kamlesh Verma, West: Land of Seller, North: 16 ft wide Road, South: Land of Naula Ji.	15.05.2024 Rs. 65,01,838.27 +UCI+other legal expenses incurred	Mr. Himanshu Roy Phone No. 9352141964 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 48,96,000/- Rs. 4,89,600/- Rs. 10,000/-
4.	Branch: Almora Borrower: Mohd. Ikram	All that part and parcel of land admeasuring 100 sq.mts. on Khata no. 00010Basrah no. 13746, Khet no. 13746 & 13748 and house constructed thereon with a total building area 38.02 sq. mts. alongwith all facilities and amenities situated in MU bahar, Mauja Rajpur Talia, patikas Pazzra, Tehsil Almora in the name of Mohammad Ikram S/o Mohammad irfan. North: Property of Dugar Singh, South: CC pathway towards village sarson, East: Stairs & path to Village sarson, West: property of Baliram.	21.01.2024 Rs. 21,00,967/- +other legal Charges+ UCI	Mr. Himanshu Roy Phone No. 9352141964 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 14,53,855/- Rs. 1,45,385/- Rs. 10,000/-
5.	Branch: Bazzpur Borrower: Mr. Pradeep Khanna & Mrs. Neha Khanna	Eqm of Commercial Property in the Name of Mrs. Neha Khanna W/o Mr. Pradeep Khanna and Mr. Pradeep Khanna S/o Mr. Naresh Kumar Khanna situated at mauza Chakarpur, Near PSB Paper Pvt. Ltd. Tehsil Bazzpur Distt. Udham Singh Nagar. Property No. 1: Sale Deed No. 2941 Dated 12.05.2011, Area 255.58 sq meters, Boundary: East: 20 ft wide, West: Property of Mr. Mukesh Kumar, North: Property of Mrs. Neha, South: Bazzpur baria Road, Property No. 2: Sale Deed No. 3087, Dated 12.05.2011, Area 766.73 sq. metres, Boundary: East: Road 20 ft wide, West: Property of Mr. Mukesh Kumar, North: Land of Devender Kaur, South: Bazzpur baria road, Sectinterest ID 400012444670, Asset ID: 200012419285	10.07.2023 Rs. 21,12,406.46/- +other legal Charges+ UCI	Mr. Himanshu Roy Phone No. 9352141964 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 1,96,82,000/- Rs. 19,68,200/- Rs. 10,000/-
6.	Branch: Rudrapur Borrower: Sanju Gupta	Residential Property in the name of Mrs. Sanju Gupta S/o Avneesh Kumar Gupta vide sale deed registered as a document no. 1777 dated 13 march 2018 measuring 79.29 sq.mtr located at Khasra/khet No. 104 Min Khata No. 00237, Chandrawati Enclave, Village Fulsunga, Pargana Rudrapur Tehsil Rudrapur, Distt. Udham Singh Nagar. On the North by: Road, On the South by: Other's Plot, On the East by: House of Basanti Kustwaha, On the West by: House of Manoj Kumar.	04.01.2024 Rs. 26,19,573.01/- +other legal Charges+ UCI	Mr. Himanshu Roy Phone No. 9352141964 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 24,79,994/- Rs. 2,47,999/- Rs. 10,000/-
7.	Branch: Rudrapur Borrower: Pramod Kumar S/o Ram Singh	Residential Property in the name of Mr. Pramod Kumar S/o Shri Ram Singh vide sale deed registered as a document no. 2830 dated 07 Jun 2017, measuring 59.47 sq.mtr located at Khasra/Khet No. 104 Min Khata No. 00530, Chandrawati Enclave, Village Fulsunga, Pargana Rudrapur Tehsil Rudrapur, Distt. Udham Singh Nagar. On the North by: Road, On the South by: Road, On the East by: House of Hare Ram Verma, On the West by: House of Gaenda Devi.	04.01.2024 Rs. 23,82,662/- +other legal Charges+ UCI	Mr. Himanshu Roy Phone No. 9352141964 E Mail I.D - Dehradun.ARD@bankofindia.co.in	Rs. 21,75,844/- Rs. 2,17,584/- Rs. 10,000/-

However The measurement of above properties however to be verified by bidders at site and also from the revenue records prior to participating in auction.

**Terms & conditions of E-Auction are as under:-** 1. E-Auction is being held on "as is where basis" "as what is basis" and will be conducted "On Line" before submitting bid EMD shall be deposited through NEFT/Fund Transfer in working hours on or before 07.03.2025 to 09.03.2025. 2. For downloading further details Process Compliance and Terms & Conditions, Please visit <https://www.bankofindia.co.in/b>. Website address of our e-Auction Service Provider M/s PSB Alliance e-auctionportal-psba@psballiance.com Bidder may visit: <https://www.ebkray.in> where "Guidelines" or bidders are available with educational videos Bidders have to complete following formalities well in Advance. Step 1: Bidders/Purchaser Registration Bidder to register on e-Auction Platform (link given above) using his mobile number and email-id. Step 2: KYC Verification Bidder to upload requisite KYC documents shall be verified by e-Auction service provider (may take 2 working days). Step 3: Transfer of EMD amount to Bidder Global EMD Wallet Online/offline of fund using NEFT/Transfer using challan generated on e-Auction Platform. Step 4: Bidding Process and Auction Result: Interested Registered bidders can bid online on e-Auction Platform after completing. Step 1, 2 and 3/Please note Step 1 to Step 2 should be completed by bidder well in advance before e-Auction date. 3. To the best of knowledge and information of the (Authorised Officer, there is no encumbrance on the properties. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims/rights/dues/affecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be demand to constitute any commitment of any representation of the bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the bank. The Authorised officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues. No claim of whatsoever nature will be entertained after submission of the online bid regarding properties put for sale. 4. Date of Inspection 06.03.2025 from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm with prior appointment with mentioned respective branches on the contact numbers given against respective branches. 5. Bids shall be submitted through online procedure only. 6. Bidders shall be deemed to have read & understood the terms & conditions of sale & be bound by them. 7. The Bid price to be submitted shall be above the Reserve price & bidders shall improve their further offers in multiples Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only). 8. It shall be the responsibility of the interested bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the property before submission of the bid. 9. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refund. 10. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price including EMD already paid, immediately on acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance of the sale price on or before 15th day of sale. The auction sale is subject to confirm by the Bank Default in deposit of amount by the successful bidder would entail forfeiture of the whole money, already deposited and property shall be put to re-auction and the defaulting bidder shall have no claim/right in respect of property amount. 11. Neither the Authorised Officer/ Bank nor e-Auction service provider will be held responsible for any internet Network problem/failure/any other technical lapses/failure etc. In order to ward-off such contingent situation the interested bidders are requested to ensure that they are technically well equipped with adequate power back-up etc for successfully participating in the Auction event. 12. The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/Registration fee other charges etc and also all the statutory dues, taxes, assessment charges etc. owing to any body. 13. The Authorised Officer/ Bank is not bound to accept the highest offer and has the absolute right & discretion to accept or reject any or all offer (s) or adjourn/postpone/cancel the e-Auction or withdraw any property or portion there of from the auction proceeding at any stage without assigning any reason there for. 14. The Sale Certificate will be issued in the name of the purchaser (s) applicant (s) and will not issued in any other name (s). 15. The Successful bidder/purchaser would bear all taxes including TDS @ 1% of sale price payable on purchase of property (if sale price is Rs. 50 lacs & above) and the taxes payable to service provider for conduction online sale. Also the fees payable for execution of sale certificate such as stamp duty, registration fee, etc. shall be borne by the successful bidder. 16. The sale is subject to rules/conditions prescribed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. Further details/enquiries if any on the terms and conditions of sale can be obtained from the respective branches on the contact number given. 17. This is also a mandatory notice of 30 days as per provision of the SARFAESI Act to the Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagors of the above accounts informing them about holding of sale/Auction aforesaid etc

Date: 03.02.2024 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer, Bank of India



# 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 PTI

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 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 said. "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 kalpvasis 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 kalpvasis, 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."



## 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.



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### 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)

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 FHs. 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)

## 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,



# 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!" The South African government said Monday that the Trump administration needed to have a better understanding of the new law, which is meant to help redress the impact of decades of white minority rule in South Africa under the apartheid regime, which ended in 1994. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said in a statement that "the South African government has not confiscated any land." During apartheid, land was taken from South Africa's Black majority, who were forced to live in areas designated for Blacks only. Billionaire Elon Musk, who is one of Trump's close allies, was born and raised in South

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

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...

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.

At the special invitation of the Chinese government, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. In a statement, Foreign Office Spokesperson Shaqat Ali Khan said the visit underscores the tradition of high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China...

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: To be known to all that I, Prabhjot Kaur W/o Sh. Parminder Singh R/O 457, Ground Floor, DDA SFS Flats, Pocket GH-13, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110087 has applied for conversion of DDA flat No. 457, Ground Floor, SFS cat-II, Pocket GH-13, Paschim Puri now known as Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110087 from lease hold to free hold in DDA.

Public Notice: Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Laxmi Devi who is/are purchasing the Residential built up Third Floor, with roof/terrace rights, built on property bearing No. L-56-A, having plot No. 38, area measuring 75 sq. yards, out of khata No. 30, situated in the area of village nanjli jalb, colony known as New Mahavir Nagar, in block-C, Gali No. 19, New Delhi from Mrs. Deepika Batra W/o Mr. Rajesh Batra who was the owner of property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 25.08.2022 (Doc. No. 21180) executed by Mrs. Deepika Batra W/o Mr. Rajesh Batra.

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. 291, property ID No. 1B/F4N/P72 area measuring 209.06 sq. mtrs. located at T.A. Urban Estate HST, Faridabad, Tehsil, District Faridabad, Haryana by virtue of Registered Deed in blood relation dated 15.09.2024 as doc. No. 4991 executed by Mr. Tarsem Lal in favour of Mr. Vijay Sharma, Mr. Vishal Sharma & Mr. Kunal Sharma in equal shares.

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

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.

Public Notice: Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Laxmi Devi who is/are purchasing the Residential built up Third Floor, with roof/terrace rights, built on property bearing No. L-56-A, having plot No. 38, area measuring 75 sq. yards, out of khata No. 30, situated in the area of village nanjli jalb, colony known as New Mahavir Nagar, in block-C, Gali No. 19, New Delhi from Mrs. Deepika Batra W/o Mr. Rajesh Batra who was the owner of property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 25.08.2022 (Doc. No. 21180) executed by Mrs. Deepika Batra W/o Mr. Rajesh Batra.

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, OUT OF KHATA NO.19/20, SITUATED IN THE REVENUE ESTATE OF VILLAGE MATALA, KNOWN AS COLONY JAIN COLONY, IN BLOCK-C EXTN. PART III, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI which is presently owned by MRS. LALITA CHAUHAN had purchased the subject property from MR. RAHUL KOHLI AND MR. VICKY CHAUHAN in favour of ADITYA BIRLA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED.

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION PHONE NO: (0240)-2333536-40,2348001-05 (PBX) FAX-(0240)-2331213 website:-http://www.aurangabadmahapalika.org/ Date: 3/2/2025 Request for Proposal E-Tender Notice No 2025-AMCA-114533-I/2024-25 Development 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.

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 Jae-yong of financial criminal charges over a contentious merger between Samsung affiliates that cemented his grip over the biggest South Korean company.

Public Notice: This is to inform the general public that Kailash Narain Sharma is the owner of Property No. 255 area measuring 33 Sq. Yds. i.e. 27.60 Sq. Mtrs. situated at Kucha Sangri, Narna Bana, Khan, Saket, Delhi - 110025. He is the owner through 3 Requisitionment Deed i.e., (1) Requisitionment Deed dated 08.02.2006 as doc. No. 1154 executed by (1) M/s. Shivam Enterprises in favour of Mr. Shivam Enterprises (2) Mr. Om Narain Mehra (3) Mr. Vinod Kumar Mehra (4) Mr. Sushant Chand Mehra (5) Mr. Akhil Kumar Mehra in favour of Mr. Kailash Narain Mehra in respect of property No. 255. (2) Requisitionment Deed dated 10.02.2006 as doc. No. 1193 executed by (1) Mr. Mohan Narain Mehra (2) Mrs. Shivani Mehra (3) Mr. Anand Mehra (4) Mr. Anish Mehra (5) Mrs. Shazia Rani Mehra (6) Mr. Santosh Kumar Mehra in favour of Mr. Kailash Narain Mehra in respect of property No. 255.

Public Notice: Reg. Entire Third Floor with roof/terrace rights "said floor" a part of Property Bearing No. 305, area measuring 80 sq.yds, falling in Kharsa No. 144 min. Situated at Anrit Puri (B), in the area of Village Garhiharia, Indira Nagar, Lajpat 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").

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 e tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:- Sr. No. Name of Work/Item Period/Tentative Qty

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 abovementioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents: A. Pending Criminal Cases

Public Notice: This is to inform the general public that Kailash Narain Sharma is the owner of Property No. 255 area measuring 33 Sq. Yds. i.e. 27.60 Sq. Mtrs. situated at Kucha Sangri, Narna Bana, Khan, Saket, Delhi - 110025. He is the owner through 3 Requisitionment Deed i.e., (1) Requisitionment Deed dated 08.02.2006 as doc. No. 1154 executed by (1) M/s. Shivam Enterprises in favour of Mr. Shivam Enterprises (2) Mr. Om Narain Mehra (3) Mr. Vinod Kumar Mehra (4) Mr. Sushant Chand Mehra (5) Mr. Akhil Kumar Mehra in favour of Mr. Kailash Narain Mehra in respect of property No. 255. (2) Requisitionment Deed dated 10.02.2006 as doc. No. 1193 executed by (1) Mr. Mohan Narain Mehra (2) Mrs. Shivani Mehra (3) Mr. Anand Mehra (4) Mr. Anish Mehra (5) Mrs. Shazia Rani Mehra (6) Mr. Santosh Kumar Mehra in favour of Mr. Kailash Narain Mehra in respect of property No. 255.

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 abovementioned election, declare for public information. The following details about my criminal antecedents: A. Pending Criminal Cases

कार्यालय नगर निगम गुरुग्राम सार्वजनिक सूचना नगर निगम गुरुग्राम के भवन क्र निकाई नं 0006 प्रॉब्लेम आईडि डीओ नो 1CJ.2QJ3 नकल नं 12465, SECTOR 2&3 PALAM VIHAR, Gurugram। के अनुसार नकल का नाम श्री दाम प्रकाश के नाम दर्श है अथ श्री दाम प्रकाश को मृत्यु दिनांक 16/05/2021 के पश्चात जो कि इस पत्र को वसोका नं 5678 दिनांक 29/09/1992 से मरिदाय का के चचेरे प्रान्नी श्री चन्द्र शेखर प्रकाश ने आनेका विवाह ही को प्रान्नी प्रॉब्लेम आईडि डीओ नो 1CJ.2QJ3 नकल नं 12465, SECTOR 2&3 PALAM VIHAR, Gurugram का सब गिअन्तुष च दिनांक 20/02/2013 से कानूनी वास्तव है।

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 11.88 sq. mtrs., approx. up to ceiling level, without roof rights, (said shop), situated at Near Katra Mohan, Main Road Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110006 with AU Small Finance Bank Ltd. All persons claiming an interest in the said property or any part thereof by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, trust, possession, easement, attachment or otherwise whatsoever are hereby required to make the same known to the undersigned at his office within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the property would be considered as unencumbered and no objections will be entertained thereafter.

JINDAL LEASEFIN LIMITED CIN : L74899DL1994PLC059252 Regd. Office : 110, Barabar Road, New Delhi - 110 001 Ph: 011-46201000, Fax : 011-46201002, E-mail : jindal@jindal.indsb Website: www.jindalleasefin.in 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 Forum House, Holambi Kalan Narela, Delhi - 110 082 to transact the business as set out in the Notice convening the EGM.

Table with 4 columns: Sl. No., Name of Court, Case No. and dated, Status of case(s), Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s). Includes details for FIR NO. 0048/2024, DATED 10/08/2024 POLICE STATION NAME - NORTH AVNUE, DISTRICT- DELHI, STATE, U/S 223(A)/3(5) OF BHARATIYA NAGARIK SANHITA 2023 False Disobeying an order from a public servant charges against the candidate.

Table with 4 columns: Sl. No., Name of Court, Case No. and dated, Status of case(s), Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s). Includes details for Case no CRL Rev. 251/2024 CaseTitled State v Ramesh Bhardwaj AND Others Prosecution has filed a criminal revision petition Before Hon'ble High Court 251/2024 against order of Discharge passed by the Spl.Judge CBI Sh. Ajay Kumar Rouse Avenue Court New Delhi.



# 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.

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.

# 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 Nations (ASEAN) 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

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.

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# BharatPe CMO Parth Joshi resigns to launch new venture



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.

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# 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

Crore in the third quarter. It stood at ₹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.

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# 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.

# 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.

# 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.

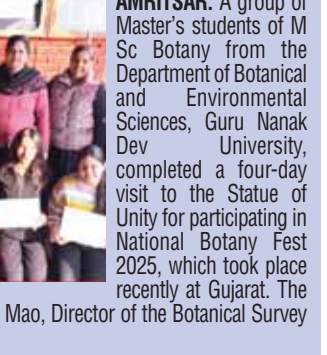
## SCIENCE NEEDS DEMOCRACY TO FLOURISH: PROF AARON CIECHANOVER

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.





For the Convenience of Rail passengers during KUMBH MELA-2025, Railways are operating several Special Trains in addition to regular trains. The date wise list of Special Trains are given below:-

SPECIAL TRAINS RUNNING ON 04.02.2025 (TUESDAY)					
Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station To	Arr. Time	Stoppages
04210	Prayagraj Sangam	11:15	Jaunpur	14:00	Prayag, Phaphamau, Phulpur, Janghai & Mariahu Stations
04209	Jaunpur	14:15	Prayagraj Sangam	17:15	
04202	Prayagraj Sangam	12:20	Alamnagar	17:00	Prayag Jn., Kunda Harnamganj, Unchahar Jn., Rae Bareilly, Bachhrawan & Utraitia Jn. Stations
04201	Alamnagar	19:15	Prayagraj Sangam	23:25	
04206	Prayagraj Sangam	13:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	17:00	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur Stations
04205	Ayodhya Cantt.	08:45	Prayagraj Sangam	12:15	
04229	Prayag Jn.	21:10	Ayodhya Cantt. Jn.	01:55	Phaphamau Jn., Sewaith, Mau Aima, Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Chilibila Jn., Kohndaur, Piparpur, Sultanpur Jn., Kurebhar, Khajurahat, Bharatkund and Masodha Station
04271	Phaphamau	13:00	Jaunpur Jn.	16:20	Tharwai, Sarai Chandi, Phulpur, Ugrasenpur, Bariyaram, Janghai, Mariyahu and Zafarabad Jn.
04293	Prayag Jn.	20:20	Lucknow	02:00	Phaphamau Jn., Atrapur, Ramchaura Road, Lalgopal Ganj, Bhadri, Kundaharnam Ganj, Garhi Manikpur, Pariawan Kalakanker Road, Arkha, Unchahar, Lachhmanpur, Daryapur, Raebareilly, Gangaganj, Harchandpur, Kundanganj, Bachhrawan, Srirajnagar, Nigohan, Kankaha, Mohanlalganj & Utraitia Stations
04233	Prayag Jn.	09:40	Ayodhya Dham Jn.	15:05	Phaphamau Jn., Sewaith, Mau Aima, Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Chilibila Jn., Kohndaur, Piparpur, Sultanpur Jn., Kurebhar, Khajurahat, Bharatkund, Masodha and Ayodhya Cantt. Jn. Stations.
04251	Prayag Jn.	20:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	23:55	
04252	Ayodhya Cantt.	15:45	Prayag Jn.	19:55	Phaphamau Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04253	Phaphamau Jn.	11:15	Ayodhya Cantt.	14:45	
04254	Ayodhya Cantt.	06:15	Phaphamau Jn.	10:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04255	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	05:35	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:30	Phaphamau, Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh, Chilibila, Khundaur, Sultanpur, Kurebhar, Khajurahat, Bharatkund, Ayodhya Cantt., Salarpur, Sohwal, Deorakot, Baragaon, Rudauli, Rauzagaon, Patranga, Daryabad, Saidkhanpur, Safdarganj, Rasauli, Barabanki, Safedabad, Malhour, Lucknow, Utrahtia, Mohanlalganj, Kankaha, Nigohan, Shrirajnagar, Bachhrawan, Kuneanganj, Harchandpur, Gangaganj, Rae Bareilly, Rupamau, Fursatganj, Jais, Bani, Gauriganj, Talakhajuri, Amethi, Misrauli, Maa Chandika Devi Dham Antu, Jagesharganj, Chilibila, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh, Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Mau Aima, Siwaith & Phaphamau Stations
02417	Subedarganj	21:35	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Etawah Jn., Tundla Jn & Aligarh Jn. Stations
02276	Delhi Jn.	09:30	Subedarganj	19:40	Aligarh Jn., Tundla Jn., Etawah Jn., Govindpuri & Fatehpur Stations
05011	Gorakhpur Jn.	14:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	19:35	Sahjanwa, Maghar, Khalilabad, Basti, Babhnan, S Narayan Chhapi, Maskanwa, Mankapur Jn., & Ayodhya Dham Jn.
05012	Ayodhya Cantt.	21:50	Gorakhpur Jn.	04:30	Ayodhya Dham Jn., Mankapur Jn., Maskanwa, S Narayan Chhapi, Babhnan, Basti, Khalilabad, Maghar & Sahjanwa, Stations
05078	Gonda Jn.	21:40	Ayodhya Dham Jn.	23:50	Barua Chak, Motiganj, Jhila, Mankapur Jn., Tikri, Nawabganj Gonda, Katra & Ramghat Halt Stations
05077	Ayodhya Dham Jn.	00:45	Gonda Jn.	03:30	
04117	Prayagraj Jn.	22:20	Ayodhya Cantt.	03:30	
04118	Ayodhya Cantt.	05:15	Prayagraj Jn.	10:15	Prayag, Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh. & Sultanpur Stations
04111	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:00	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	18:50	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya Dham, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Mau Aima, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations
04112	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:00	
04113	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	07:45	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya Dham, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Mau Aima, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations
04114	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:45	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	08:00	
04120	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	13:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	04:00	Prayag, Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Sultanpur, Ayodhya Cantt., Ayodhya Dham, Gushaiganj, Akbarpur, Shahganj Jn., Jaunpur Jn., Zafarabad Jn., Mariahu, Janghai Jn., Bhadohi, Banaras, Madhosingh Gyanpur Road, Handia Khas, Jhusi & Prayagraj Rambag Stations
05158	Jhusi Jn.	06:30	Bhatni Jn.	14:50	Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Varanasi, Varanasi City, Aunrihar Jn., Nandganj, Ghazipur City, Yusufpur, Karimuddin Pur, Chit Baragaon, Phephna Jn., Ballia, Bansdih Road, Sahatwar & Suraimanpur Stations
05164	Jhusi Jn.	10:00	Thawe Jn.	20:30	Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Varanasi Jn., Varanasi City, Aunrihar Jn., Ghazipur City, Yusufpur, Karimuddin Pur, Chit Baragaon, Phephna Jn., Ballia, Bansdih Road, Sahatwar, Suraimanpur, Chhapra, Chhapra Kacheri, Khairah, Paterhi, Mahraua, Sham Kauria, Masrakh, Rajapat, Dighwa Dubauli, Sidhwalia, Ratan Sarai, Manjehagarh & Gopalganj Stations
05004	Gorakhpur Jn.	21:30	Jhusi Jn.	06:00	Chauri Chaura, Gauri Bazar, Deoria Sadar, Bhatni Jn, Salempur Jn, Belthara Road, Mau Jn, Aunrihar Jn., Varanasi City, Varanasi, Banaras, Madhosingh, Gyanpur Road & Handia Khas Stations
05003	Jhusi	07:45	Gorakhpur Jn.	16:25	
05013	Gorakhpur Jn	06:25	Ayodhya Dham	11:30	Sahjanwa, Maghar, Khalilabad, Basti, Babhnan, Swami Narayan Chhapi, Maskanwa, Mankapur Jn & Katra Stations
05014	Ayodhya Dham	12:15	Gorakhpur Jn	17:30	
06588	Visakhapatnam	22:20	Gorakhpur Jn	19:30	Vizianagaram, Srikakulam Road, Palasa, Brahmapur, Chhatrapur, Balugaon, Khurda Road, Bhubaneswar, Naraj Marthapur, Dhenkanal, Angul, Boinda, Rairakhol, Sambalpur City, Jhatsuguda Road, Raigarh, Champa, Bilaspur, Pendra Road, Anuppur, Sahdol, Umari, Katni Jn, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Mirzapur, Chunar, Varanasi, Jaunpur Jn, Aunrihar Jn, Mau Jn & Deoria Sadar

SPECIAL TRAINS RUNNING ON 05.02.2025 (WEDNESDAY)					
Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station To	Arr. Time	Stoppages
04210	Prayagraj Sangam	11:15	Jaunpur	14:00	Prayag, Phaphamau, Phulpur, Janghai & Mariahu Stations
04209	Jaunpur	14:15	Prayagraj Sangam	17:15	
04202	Prayagraj Sangam	12:20	Alamnagar	17:00	Prayag Jn., Kunda Harnamganj, Unchahar Jn., Rae Bareilly, Bachhrawan & Utrahtia Jn. Stations
04201	Alamnagar	19:15	Prayagraj Sangam	23:25	
04206	Prayagraj Sangam	13:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	17:00	Prayag, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04205	Ayodhya Cantt.	08:45	Prayagraj Sangam	12:15	
04251	Prayag Jn.	20:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	23:55	Phaphamau Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04252	Ayodhya Cantt.	15:45	Prayag Jn.	19:55	
04253	Phaphamau Jn.	11:15	Ayodhya Cantt.	14:45	
04254	Ayodhya Cantt.	06:15	Phaphamau Jn.	10:15	Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn. & Sultanpur stations
04255	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	05:35	Prayag Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:30	Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Chilibila Jn., Khundaur, Sultanpur, Kurebhar, Khajurahat, Bharatkund, Ayodhya Cantt., Salarpur, Sohwal, Deorakot, Baragaon, Rudauli, Rauzagaon, Patranga, Daryabad, Saidkhanpur, Safdarganj, Rasauli, Barabanki, Safedabad, Malhour, Lucknow, Utrahtia, Mohanlalganj, Kankaha, Nigohan, Shrirajnagar, Bachhrawan, Kuneanganj, Harchandpur, Gangaganj, Rae Bareilly Jn., Rupamau, Fursatganj, Jais, Bani, Gauriganj, Talakhajuri, Amethi, Misrauli, Maa Chandika Devi Dham Antu, Jagesharganj, Chilibila Jn., Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Shanidev Dham Bishnathganj, Mau Aima, Siwaith and Phaphamau Jn. stations
02417	Subedarganj	21:35	Delhi Jn.	08:55	Fatehpur, Govindpuri, Etawah, Tundla & Aligarh stations
02418	Delhi Jn.	09:30	Subedarganj	19:40	
09403	Ahmedabad Jn.	21:15	Janghai Jn.	03:00	Anand Jn, Chhayapuri, Godhra Jn, Dahod, Ratlam Jn, Nagda Jn, Bhawani Mandi, Ramganj Mandi, Kota Jn, Sawai Madhopur, Gangapur City, Bayana Jn, Agra Fort, Tundla Jn, Etawah Jn, Govindpuri, Fatehpur & Prayagraj Jn Stations
05011	Gorakhpur Jn.	14:30	Ayodhya Cantt.	19:35	Sahjanwa, Maghar, Khalilabad, Basti, Babhnan, S Narayan Chhapi, Maskanwa, Mankapur Jn & Ayodhya Dham Jn stations
05012	Ayodhya Cantt.	21:50	Gorakhpur Jn.	04:30	
05078	Gonda Jn.	21:40	Ayodhya Dham Jn.	23:50	Barua Chak, Motiganj, Jhila, Mankapur Jn, Tikri, Nawabganj Gonda, Katra & Ramghat Halt stations
05077	Ayodhya Dham Jn.	00:45	Gonda Jn.	03:30	
04117	Prayagraj Jn	22:20	Ayodhya Cantt.	03:30	
04118	Ayodhya Cantt.	05:15	Prayagraj Jn	10:15	Prayag, Phaphamau Jn, Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh & Sultanpur stations
04111	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:00	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	18:50	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Jaunpur Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya Dham, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Mau Aima, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations
04112	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	06:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	21:00	
04113	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	07:45	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhusi, Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Bhadohi, Janghai Jn., Mariahu, Zafarabad Jn., Jaunpur Jn., Shahganj Jn., Akbarpur, Goshainganj, Ayodhya Dham, Ayodhya Cantt., Sultanpur, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Mau Aima, Phaphamau Jn. & Prayag Stations
04114	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	17:45	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	08:00	
04120	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	13:30	Prayagraj Jn. (Ring Rail)	04:00	Prayag, Phaphamau Jn., Mau Aima, Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratappgarh Jn., Sultanpur, Ayodhya Cantt., Ayodhya Dham, Gushaiganj, Akbarpur, Shahganj Jn., Jaunpur Jn., Zafarabad Jn., Mariahu, Janghai Jn., Bhadohi, Banaras, Madhosingh, Gyanpur Road, Handia Khas, Jhusi & Prayagraj Rambag stations
05003	Jhusi	07:45	Gorakhpur Jn.	16:25	Handia Khas, Gyanpur Road, Madhosingh, Banaras, Varanasi, Varanasi City, Aunrihar Jn., Mau Jn, Belthara Road, Salempur Jn, Bhatni Jn, Deoria Sadar, Gauri Bazar & Chauri Chaura Stations.
01033	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus	11:30	Mau Jn.	22:00	Dadar, Thane, Kalyan Jn, Igatpuri, Nasik Road, Manmad Jn, Jalgaon Jn, Bhusaval Jn, Khandwa Jn., Talvadya, Chhanera, Khirkhiya, Harda, Banapura, Itarsi Jn, Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Chheoki, Mirzapur, Chunar, Varanasi, Shahganj Jn & Azamgarh Stations.
06001	Puratchi Thalayyar Dr. M. G. Ramachandran	14:20	Gomati Nagar	14:15	Gudur Jn, Nellore, Ongole, Chirala, Tenali Jn, New Guntur, Vijayawada Jn, Khammam, Warangal, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Balharshah, Gondia Jn, Balaghat Jn, Nainpur Jn, Jabalpur, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Chheoki, Mirzapur, Chunar, Varanasi & Ayodhya Dham Jn stations
05267	Muzaffarpur Jn	17:15	Jhusi	09:55	Motipur, Mehsi, Chakia, Bapudm Motihari, Sagauli Jn, Bettiah, Narkatiaganj Jn, Bagaha, Kaptanganj Jn, Gorakhpur Jn, Deoria Sadar, Bhatni Jn, Mau Jn, Aunrihar Jn. & Varanasi stations
07083	Machelipatnam	22:00	Azamgarh	17:15	Gudlavalleru, Gudivada Jn, Vijayawada Jn, Khammam, Warangal, Ramgundam, Mancheral, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Balharshah, Chandrapur, Nagpur Jn., Betul, Itarsi Jn, Pipariya, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur, Katni, Maihar, Satna, Manikpur Jn, Prayagraj Chheoki, Mirzapur, Varanasi & Shahganj Jn stations
05013	Gorakhpur Jn	06:25	Ayodhya Dham	11:30	Sahjanwa, Maghar, Khalilabad, Basti, Babhnan, Swami Narayan Chhapi, Maskanwa, Mankapur Jn & Katra Stations
05014	Ayodhya Dham	12:15	Gorakhpur Jn	17:30	

During the Rail journey never travel with inflammable objects like Crackers, Petrol, Kerosene & Gas Cylinder etc.

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# 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 error from Gukesh to first knock down a pawn and then his technical abilities were enough to see the normal blitz games through with a 1-1 score. This took the match into sudden death, where Praggnanandhaa drew white and once again Gukesh was better with some imaginative play on the queen side that netted him a pawn. The sudden death had a time control of two minutes and thirty seconds for white against three for black but that did not deter Praggnanandhaa from trying to defend an inferior endgame. Just while the position looked completely drawn and another game was on the cards, Gukesh lost control in the battle of nerves and first lost a pawn then his last remaining knight. Praggnanandhaa showed perfect technique to take the full point and his maiden victory at the Masters. For Gukesh, this was the second year running when he tied for first position and lost the tiebreaker. In the previous edition, Gukesh had lost to Chinese Wei Yi.

# 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 a 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 opposition. You always think of what more could you do, how could we get him out, how could we slow him down and, but yeah, credit to us for, you know, sticking in there and fighting back and keeping them down to 240 after the start they got," Buttler said. The England captain acknowledged the pitch remained the same for his batters as the visitors were bowled out for 97 in 10.3 overs with Phil Salt scoring a 23-ball 55. "I've played in a few games like this and it generally goes one of two ways, you either get actually somewhere near or you fall in a heap and today was that day," he said. "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 get 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. Buttler said India spinner Varun Chakravarthy was "accurate" throughout this series in which the spinner took 14 wickets. "He's had a good series. He's been very accurate in his subtle variations and he's got a really good length, so he's done well," Buttler said.





# ACCELERATING BHARAT



## ACCELERATING INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE, ECONOMY & INNOVATION

- Cancer Care Centres in all district hospitals in the next 5 years
- Lower costs for 36 life-saving medicines
- Health cover for over 1 crore gig workers
- ₹1 lakh crore Urban Challenge Fund for better cities
- Enhanced air connectivity for 120 new destinations as part of UDAN
- 50,000 Atal Tinkering Labs to be set up in Government schools in the next 5 years

## ACCELERATING MSME

- Investment and turnover limits for the classification of all MSMEs to be enhanced by 2.5x and 2x respectively
- Improved credit guarantees:
  - Micro and Small Enterprises: From ₹5 crore to ₹10 crore
  - Startups: ₹10 crore to ₹20 crore
  - Well-run exporter MSMEs: Up to ₹20 crore
- 10 lakh credit cards with limit of ₹5 lakh for micro enterprises
- Decriminalization of over 100 provisions

## ACCELERATING AGRICULTURE

- Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana to cover 100 districts with low productivity, benefiting 1.7 crore farmers
- Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) loan limit enhanced to ₹5 lakh
- Short-term loans for 7.7 crore farmers, fishermen and dairy farmers through KCC
- Launch of mission for Aatmanirbharta in pulses with a special focus on Tur, Urad & Masoor

## ACCELERATING EXPORTS

- Export Promotion Mission to facilitate easier credit and cross-border factoring support
- Upgradation of air cargo infrastructure and warehousing with user-friendly customs protocols

## MAXIMISING TAX SAVINGS

- Income up to ₹12 Lakh (₹12.75 Lakh for salaried individuals) will attract no income tax under New Regime

Income	Immense savings across all income groups (as per New Regime)
₹12 Lakh	₹80,000 (no income tax payable)
₹13 Lakh	₹25,000
₹16 Lakh	₹50,000
₹18 Lakh	₹70,000
₹20 Lakh	₹90,000
₹25 Lakh	₹1,10,000

- Interest limit on TDS for senior citizens doubled to ₹1 Lakh, and the rent limit raised from ₹2.4 Lakh to ₹6 Lakh