



Follow us on: [@TheDailyPioneer](#) [facebook.com/dailypioneer](#) [instagram.com/dailypioneer/](#)

**CITY 3**  
VICTORY OF COLLECTIVE  
FIGHT: RAHUL

**WORLD 6**  
WORLD LEADERS STAND IN  
SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINE

**SPORT 8**  
INDIA ON BACKFOOT AFTER  
JAISWAL GRITTY FIFTY

Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

LUCKNOW, SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3



Established 1864  
**sunday pioneer**

www.dailypioneer.com



RNI No. 2016/1957  
Late City Vol. 160 Issue 54  
\* Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

# Draw 100 days action plan: Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

In a strategic move ahead of the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has instructed his Council of Ministers to draft an "actionable, measurable, and clearly defined" plan to be presented at the meeting on March 3. During the last Cabinet meeting on February 21, Modi directed his ministerial colleagues to prepare an action plan for the next 100 days.

With the Lok Sabha polls expected to be announced after March 13, he has urged them to engage in extensive consultations, including with experienced individuals such as senior bureaucrats, grassroots workers, and domain experts, before finalising their action plans, according to sources.

During the meeting, Modi tasked his ministers with outlining key initiatives and deliverables for the next 100 days, along with a comprehensive five-year roadmap. These documents, focusing on the Government's priorities and strategies, are to be submitted to the Cabinet Secretariat.

Sources said Modi has instructed them and their ministries to brainstorm over the agenda for the period, which is also the likely duration before a new government takes office



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during the foundation stone laying ceremony of multiple key initiatives for cooperative sector in New Delhi on Saturday

PTI

following the Lok Sabha elections expected in April-May.

The Prime Minister told the Cabinet that they should draw up these plans without considering who gets what ministerial positions post-elections. Sources said the prime minister wants to ensure that the government's work continues amid the poll cycle, and his call for preparing the agenda for the next 100 days is part of such an effort.

He has also repeatedly expressed confidence in the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance retaining power at the Centre. He recently asserted that he has already begun preparing a roadmap for his third term and has received suggestions from over 15 lakh people.

During a cabinet meeting

held in the first week of February, PM Modi cautioned his Cabinet Ministers against complacency, urging them to work diligently for the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Despite the favorable momentum from the consecration of the Sri Ram Janmabhoomi

temple in Ayodhya, Modi emphasised that the BJP should not underestimate the challenge. He referred to the BJP's casual approach in the 2004 elections, highlighting the need to avoid complacency.

Earlier, at the party's national convention at Bharat Mandapam, Modi urged party workers to dedicate themselves to engaging with new voters over the next 100 days.

Continued on Page 5

## UP GOVT CANCELS POLICE RECRUITMENT EXAMS

### Fresh test to be held in six months, STF to probe into allegations of paper leak

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a major decision, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, ordered the cancellation of the Police Constable Recruitment Examination-2023 held on February 17 and 18 following allegations of question paper leak.

He ordered a fresh examination to be conducted within the next six months with utmost transparency.

The decision came following a thorough review of the ongoing investigation by the Special Task Force and the actions taken thus far regarding the examination.

Reiterating his firm stance on transparency and fairness of exams, the chief minister stated, "Playing with the hard work of the youth and compromising the integrity of examinations will not be tolerated. Stringent action will be taken against those responsible."

More than 240 people were arrested and detained by police across the state for allegedly adopting or planning to use unfair means in the recruitment exam.

Following the chief minister's directive, the Home department issued an order to

cancel the examination.

As per the order, after careful examination of the facts and information pertaining to the police recruitment examination held on February 17 and 18, 2024, the government has decided, in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and transparency, to cancel this examination. The Police Recruitment Board has been instructed to proactively pursue legal measures, including the initiation of First Information Reports (FIRs), in response to any instances of negligence.

The government has decided to get the case investigated by the STF and has issued clear instructions to take the strictest action against the persons or institutions found guilty. Additionally, instructions have been given to conduct fresh examinations within six months, ensuring comprehensive fairness. Moreover, candidates will be provided with free transportation facilities through the services of the Uttar Pradesh Transport Corporation.

More than 48 lakh candidates had appeared in the examination conducted on February 17 and 18 across the state.

In response to concerns raised regarding the Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination-2023, conducted by the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission on February 11, the chief minister has decided to get the matter investigated.

The additional chief secretary of the Appointment and Personnel department has issued an order to this effect.

In light of information and complaints received by the government regarding the Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination-2023 held on February 11, it has been decided that a thorough examination of complaints will be made at the government level to uphold the integrity and transparency of the examination process.

The order specifies that if anyone wants to bring to notice any kind of complaint regarding this examination, or facts affecting its sanctity, they should submit their full name, address and evidence to the email address of the Department of Personnel and Appointment at secyappoint@nic.in by February 27.

## 24 die as tractor-trolley falls into Kasganj pond

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a tragic accident in Kasganj, 24 villagers, including eight children, were killed while 10 others were injured when a tractor-trolley they were travelling in fell into a pond on Saturday morning.

The group was en route to the river Ganga for a holy bath to mark the auspicious occasion of Maghi Purnima early on Saturday morning.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have expressed grief at the loss of lives in the incident.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced a compensation of Rs 2 lakh each for the family members of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for those who suffered injuries in the accident.

"The loss of lives in a road

accident in Kasganj district is extremely heart-wrenching. My condolences are with the bereaved family," Yogi wrote in a post on his official X handle.

"District administration officials have been instructed to provide proper, free treatment to all the injured. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to grant peace to the departed souls and speedy recovery to the injured," he added.

Inspector General of Aligarh Range Shalabh Mathur confirmed the deaths in the mishap, saying eight children and seven women among the deceased. He said the tractor-trolley was coming from Jaithara in Etah district.

The accident occurred when the tractor driver lost control while trying to avoid a car, causing the trolley to overturn into a seven to eight-foot-deep mud-filled pond on Patiali Daryav Ganj road in Patiali area of Kasganj.

## EC plugs transfer, posting loopholes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI

Noting violations of transfer and posting instructions for officers ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, the Election Commission has instructed States to ensure that officers transferred out of a district

are not posted in any district within the same parliamentary constituency. By adjusting its policy on officer transfers before elections, the EC aims to close loopholes exploited by State governments. This action follows the Election Commission's serious concern over instances where officers were transferred to adjacent districts within the

same parliamentary constituency by State governments. In a related development, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar announced on Saturday that most political parties in Tamil Nadu have urged the EC to conduct the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in a single phase in the State.

Following his two-day visit to Tamil Nadu to assess elections preparedness, the CEC emphasised that the Election Commission (EC) would take strict action against officials who fail to ensure a level playing field for all parties, saying that "in a democracy, officials should be absolutely impartial."

Continued on Page 5

## BJP nixes Congress Temple tax Bill

PTI ■ BENGALURU

In a setback to the ruling Congress in Karnataka, a Bill that sought to collect funds from temples with over ₹10 lakh annual income was defeated by the Opposition BJP-JD(S) combine in the Legislative Council. The Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed by the Legislative Assembly earlier this week. It was defeated by a voice vote in the Upper House, where the Opposition has a majority, on Friday.

The Bill among other things, proposes to collect five per cent from temples whose gross income is between ₹10 lakh and less than ₹1 crore and 10 per cent from temples whose income is above ₹1 crore, to be put into a Common Pool Fund, administered by Rajya Dharmika Parishath, which is proposed to be used for Archakas' (priests) welfare and upkeep of 'C' category temples (State controlled) whose annual income is less than ₹5 lakh.

The act that was earlier amended in 2011 had made



way for five per cent of the net income of temples with annual income between ₹5 lakh and ₹10 lakh and 10 per cent of the net income of temples with annual income of over ₹10 lakh would come to the fund.

The amendment Bill had created a huge controversy, as it angered the Opposition, especially the BJP, which charged the ruling Congress with trying to fill its "empty coffers" with temple money, while, the Congress had sought to turn the tables saying the saffron party had effected an amendment in 2011 to seek funds from high-income Hindu shrines.

Leader of the Opposition in Council Kota Srinivas Poojary,

who was the Muzrai Minister during the BJP government, while welcoming the move to provide social security to Archakas, opposed diversion of the revenue earned by temples. He questioned why the government can't provide funds in the budget for their welfare.

The Opposition also opposed the proposal in the Bill for nomination of the temple committee president by the government.

Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy, trying to convince the Opposition, assured the House that the government would not interfere in the nomination of the temple committee president and also to reduce the amount proposed to be diverted from

the temples to the common pool.

Highlighting that the Bill only proposes minor changes to what the BJP government had proposed in 2011, he said, the intention is the welfare of Archakas at 'C' category temples and the upkeep of such temples. As the Opposition insisted that changes be made to the bill before it is passed, Reddy sought time till Monday, as he needed to discuss it with the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as it involves financial implications.

However, the Deputy Chairman MK Pranesh, who was in the Chair, did not give time till Monday saying that there is no such provision as the House has already taken up the Bill for consideration.

The Bill was subsequently put to vote and it was defeated by the Opposition BJP-JD(S) combine. This is the second such setback to the Congress government in this session, as the BJP and JD(S) combine had referred the Karnataka Souharda Cooperative (Amendment) Bill 2024 to the select committee earlier this week.

**PATANJALI®**  
**Kesh Kanti Advance**

*Tootna mana Hai!*

**Power of 30 Herbs**

**for complete nourishment of hair**

- Stops hair fall • Promotes growth of new hair
- Repairs damaged hair • Prevents premature graying of hair
- Makes the scalp dandruff free

**Kesh Kanti Advance**  
Herbal Hair Expert Oil

Repairs damaged hair in a week  
Grows new hair in 1-2 months  
Prevents hair fall  
Makes the scalp dandruff free  
Promotes hair growth & health  
Made with 30 precious herbs

100 ml



# Yogi suggests master plan for development on lines of SCR

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, reviewed the master plan for development of Ramnagar (Varanasi), Moradabad, Hapur, Rae Bareilly, Bareilly and Lucknow.

The chief minister directed the officials to prepare a regional development plan on the lines of the State Capital Region (SCR) by keeping Varanasi at the centre and connecting the border districts.

“The Lucknow Development Authority should be expanded till the border of Lucknow district in which many villages are included in the master plan. Make sure that the inhabited land is not declared green land,” he added.

The Master Plan 2031 of districts Ramnagar (Varanasi), Moradabad, Hapur, Rae Bareilly, Bareilly and Lucknow was presented before Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in a high-level meeting held at his official residence on Saturday.

As per the major guidelines given by the chief minister in the meeting, the implementation of the master plan must proceed without delay. It is essential to engage with local public representatives and senior officials and execute the plan expeditiously. Many villages are now part of urban development plans and it is to be ensured these villages are not declared as green land. Populated land cannot be considered green land.

On the lines of the SCR, it is necessary to prepare a regional development plan by keeping Varanasi at the centre and connecting the border districts. A detailed action plan in this regard is to be prepared and submitted to the government as soon as possible.

The guidelines stress on



further expanding industrial and commercial areas in the new master plan of Moradabad (Gajraula). This area holds immense potential and must be utilised effectively. Such expansion will not only boost the economy but also generate employment opportunities. The guidelines state that there is a need for a new bus terminal and bypass routes in Gajraula and it should be included in the master plan. Pipelines and CETP are also to be established for pure drinking water.

The guidelines state that the limits of the LDA should be extended to the entire Lucknow district. Additionally, the ‘State Capital Region Development Authority’ is being formed. These efforts will give impetus to planned and stable development in the state capital region.

Information about land use is to be made public. All

data regarding land status, including details of each ‘khasra’, should be readily accessible online to the public.

The guidelines stress on conducting a comprehensive study of the present and future needs of all districts. Each district’s unique potential should be identified and encouraged within the master plan. Clusters should be developed to encourage local crafts and traditional products. Besides, space should be allocated in the industrial area for the establishment of industrial training institutes.

The guidelines state that development authorities must embark on a quest for innovative opportunities. They should extend their reach beyond the confines of the municipal corporation, broaden their horizons, and devise strategies to create fresh sources of revenue.

It stresses on integrating

the development of religious and spiritual sites into the master plan.

Furthermore, concerted efforts should be made towards facilitating nearby residential accommodations for industrial workers. The guideline states that efficient traffic management is a crucial aspect in urban areas, requiring collaborative efforts. It says designating locations for taxi-auto stands and street vendor zones is essential and land for this should be clearly identified in the master plan. It stresses on determining suitable space for multi-level parking. The guideline says there is an All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Rae Bareilly and it should be made a part of the master plan this time. New townships should be developed in the city and conservation of ponds and other water bodies should be prioritised, it adds.

## 12-year-old boy feared drowned in Indira canal

**Lucknow (PNS):** A 12-year-old boy was feared drowned in Indira canal on Saturday morning. A team of SDRF and local police could not trace the boy, who fell into the canal under Gosainganj police station. Veer Gupta (12) of Ansal City, who was there with his family, accidentally fell into the canal on Saturday morning.

“A team of SDRF was immediately pressed into the rescue work, but the child has yet to be found,” Gosainganj SHO Dinesh Chandra Mishra said, adding the rescue operation would resume on Sunday.

Meanwhile, a Zomato delivery boy was killed in a road mishap in Kakori on Friday night. Police were informed around 9 am on Saturday about a mutilated body lying on the outer ring road in Udit Khara (Kakori). The police reached the spot found a mobile phone lying beside the body. They called the family, who ascertained the identity of the deceased.

Investigating officer Shyam Babu Singh (S-I) said the deceased was identified as Arvind Kumar Chaudhary (30) of New Kanshiram Colony in Hans Khara, Para. “Younger brother identified the deceased and the body was sent for autopsy,” he said. The sub-inspector said Arvind was hit by some speeding vehicle while he was returning home. “Arvind worked as a Zomato delivery boy,” he said.

## 13 hurt as police car securing route for CM cavalcade meets with accident



**Lucknow, (PNS):** At least 13 people, including police personnel, were injured when a police jeep met with an accident here Saturday evening while securing the route for Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s cavalcade, officials said.

It was not immediately clear whether the chief minister was in the convoy which met with the accident in Arjunanj while returning from the airport here.

According to sources in police, the accident occurred when the speeding jeep hit a vehicle parked on the roadside while trying to avoid an animal that suddenly came before it.

The sources said the local police jeep was at least a kilometre ahead of the cavalcade.

(TOP) Police officers look at the damaged vehicles and (RIGHT) a child injured in the accident

A police jeep travelling ahead of the convoy of the chief minister met with an accident in Arjunanj market area on Saturday evening. Thirteen persons were injured, according to Lucknow Police Commissioner SB Shiradkar.

Those injured include police personnel and they have been rushed to a hospital for medical care.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said the stray cattle menace had become a “dangerous truth” of Uttar Pradesh. “The convoy of the chief minister itself met with an accident today due to the problem of stray animals not being



taken seriously. Many people have been injured. (It is) Sad as well as worrying,” he said in a post on X in Hindi. “The problem of (stray) animals is a dangerous truth of Uttar Pradesh. This is a question of people’s lives. The BJP should take a lesson from this incident,” he said.

## KGMU dept celebrates Foundation Day

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The department of anaesthesiology and critical care, King George’s Medical University, organised its Foundation Day celebration and alumni meet on Saturday.

The day commenced with a ceremony reflecting on the department’s journey, milestones, and the contributions of faculty, staff, and students over the years. KGMU Vice-Chancellor Prof Soniya Nityanand was the chief guest while Prof V-C Prof Apjit Kaur and Dean of Academics Prof Amita Jain were the guests of honour. HoD Prof Monica Kohli, shared insights on the department’s impact and future directions.

Prof Kohli said that the department has been at the forefront of anaesthesia educa-

tion since its inception in 1961. She emphasised the department’s commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and research. Currently, the department boasts of a 30-member faculty and provides routine and emergency anaesthesia services round the clock.

Furthermore, Prof Kohli highlighted the department’s extensive services, including intensive care, pain management clinics, pre-anesthetic check-ups, and specialised services for liver transplant and complex surgeries. The department also provides teaching and training to undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental students and houses the third Human Patient Simulator (HPS) in the country.

The alumni meet served as a reunion for postgraduates to reconnect and reminisce about their academic experiences. Attendees had the opportunity to share success stories and engage in discussions on industry trends. Networking sessions aimed to facilitate professional connections among alumni, current students, and faculty, strengthening the department’s community and fostering collaboration.

## CBMR study to help select apt antifungal drugs

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

In a recent study conducted by Centre for BioMedical Research (CBMR) in collaboration with Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences (RMLIMS), scientists have successfully identified specific metabolites (end products of metabolism) for the most prevalent fungi, which is likely to aid in the selection of appropriate drugs for treating fungal infections.

The study was led by Bikash Baishya from CBMR and Prof Anupam Das (microbiology) at RMLIMS.

Baishya explained that dermatophytes are fungi that commonly cause superficial infections of the skin, hair, and nails. These fungi are spread through direct contact with other people (anthropophilic organisms), animals (zoophilic organisms), soil (geophilic organisms), and other indirect sources. “The dermatophytic agents Trichophyton mentagrophyte and Trichophyton rubrum are the most frequent causative agents of dermatophytic skin diseases. Identifying dermatophytes and determining their susceptibility to drugs

are time-consuming processes due to their slow growth,” he explained.

“Previous studies have shown that knowing specific metabolites of a pathogen can expedite determining antimicrobial susceptibility. However, there has been a lack of research demonstrating specific metabolites for dermatophytes.

In their latest findings, Baishya and Prof Das successfully identified specific metabolites for the most prevalent dermatophytes, Trichophyton mentagrophyte, Trichophyton rubrum, using NMR spectroscopy.

“Identifying specific metabolites in Trichophyton mentagrophyte and Trichophyton rubrum is the first step towards distinguishing various dermatophytic species and infections, offering hope for early determination of antifungal susceptibility through detection of metabolic end points (MEP) for improved patient care,” Das said.

He emphasised the global concern over the increased incidence of fungal diseases and the challenge of improving clinical outcomes due to the significant host toxicity of antifungal drugs.

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A private bank sales manager and his aide were arrested on the charges of fraudulently getting a loan sanctioned to a customer without his consent and using the money personally, in Hazratganj on Saturday.

The accused were identified as Fida Mirza (sales manager of IDFC bank) and his aide Vikas Kureel of Chowk. The matter came to light after one Ankur Singh of IIM road filed a complaint against a sales manager of IDFC bank (Hazratganj) and latter’s aide, accusing them of first fraudulently getting a loan sanctioned in his name and then deducting the installment

from his bank account.

“I noticed that a sum of Rs 35,000 was withdrawn from my SBI account on different dates and he got an e-statement to see the account in which the money was transferred in 2021,” he stated in the complaint. To his surprise, he found that the money was taken by IDFC bank.

He sent an email to the bank but did not get any help. He was later told by the bank through a letter that he had taken the loan and but did not pay the installments. As Ankur did not get any help, he got his bank account closed to stop further deduction of money. He later contacted the sales manager, who allegedly threatened him. The police

said the sales manager used Aadhaar number and other credentials of Ankur to get the loan sanctioned from the IDFC bank. “Ankur found in the records of IDFC bank that his name, his father’s name and his address were written in an Aadhaar card photocopy attached in the loan processing file but the photo was of a different person,” the police said.

The police said that the sales manager used Ankur’s Aadhaar details and Vikas’s photo to get the loan sanctioned. “The case appears to be just the tip of an iceberg. There is a possibility that there may be more people involved in the gang,” a spokesman said.

## LU research scholar secures internship with Taiwan univ

**Lucknow (PNS):** Prakhar Mishra, a research scholar in the chemistry department at Lucknow University under the supervision of Dr Narendra Kumar Singh, has recently secured a fully funded internship position in the department of energy engineering at the National United University, Taiwan. The three-month internship, scheduled from May 1 to July 31, is made possible through the prestigious International Internship Pilot Program (IIPP) by the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) of the Taiwan government. Prakhar will work in the laboratory of Prof Tzu

Hsuan Chiang, focusing on research to fabricate an electrocatalyst. This electrocatalyst will undergo thorough analysis of its electrochemical performance for critical reactions such as the oxygen reduction reaction (ORR), oxygen evolution reaction (OER), and hydrogen evolution reaction (HER). Additionally, he will participate in assembling zinc-air batteries and alkaline water electrolysis, followed by meticulous measurements of their electrochemical performance.

“This internship marks a significant contribution to Prakhar Mishra’s pursuit of advancing sustainable energy

goals, aligning with global efforts to address environmental challenges more effectively. He has been actively engaged in cutting-edge research in the field of water electrolysis and methanol fuel cell technology as part of his PhD programme since December 2020, working closely with Dr Singh, Lucknow University spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Alok Kumar Rai, along with head of the chemistry department Prof Anil Mishra, congratulated Prakhar Mishra, and commending his enthusiasm and dedication in achieving this milestone.

NOTICE  
Sri Aman Singh (Borrower) have agreed to create mortgage in respect of Entire First Floor of House No. 118/390-F Kaushalpur Kanpur Nagar With M/s CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED (CIFCL), that Original Agreement to sale dated 26/05/2012 executed by Sarder Jasveer Singh Juneja in favour of Naveen Kumar which is registered in Book No. 1 at serial no. 4594 at the office of Sub Registrar Kanpur Nagar is lost. If any person having any claim against the said Property can contact to me, within 07 days. Bharat Bhatnagar, Advocate Office Room No. 14 Second Floor Mudgal Advhikta Bhawan Civil Court Kanpur Nagar Mob. 09839034426

## ‘Diagnosis of juvenile diabetic cases has increased due to awareness’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

There has been an increased detection of juvenile diabetic cases in the city owing to a rise in awareness about the disease, according to Dr Arpita from the pediatric department of King George’s Medical University. She pointed out that 75-80 juvenile diabetics were enrolled at the center in KGMU. “There are one or two enrolments of fresh juvenile diabetics in a month. It’s a chronic illness where the patients are on insulin lifelong,” Dr Arpita said.

She said that the cases are being diagnosed more because of increased awareness and referrals. “These patients are aged 4-7 years and 8-12 years. I have seen patients as young as 1 year. The symptoms include increased thirst, frequent urination but no weight gain despite

eating more. If left undetected, they may land in an emergency situation called diabetic ketoacidosis in which the child has increased respiratory rate and altered sensorium and sometimes seizures. Majority of them — 60-70 per cent — are diagnosed when they have these emergency situations because they ignore the symptoms,” she explained. “This is an autoimmune condition which can be triggered by infection or allergy. When these patients go to schools, they are exposed to a lot of infection. The other set of patients are those entering puberty,” she added.

She said pathophysiology between both the diabetic adults and diabetic children was different. “In children, it is Type 1 diabetes whereas in adults it is Type 2 diabetes. The child has to be put on lifelong insulin which is the only treat-

ment available, unfortunately for us,” she said.

She said that the minimum injections which they get is four per day apart from the sugar monitoring pricks. “We have to constantly monitor their sugars because before giving insulin, checking the sugar is mandatory,” she added.

Dr Arpita said that toddlers were a challenging age. Sometimes they prescribed 4 to 5 injections since they eat constantly without having a set pattern. She, however, admitted that they were able to lead a normal life provided they are compliant with their diet and compliant with their schedule.

“They have to follow a routine and start from the basics such as diet and physical activity. They could do anything in life if they follow these,” she said. She said that for the juvenile diabetics, half-an-hour to

one-hour activity is advised by them because sugar is something which is not only dependent on one’s diet but also dependent on physical activity, stress levels, and how much one is sleeping with an interplay of so many things.

“We have to be sure that the child is doing all these things. That is why we have a WhatsApp group to support them because there could be an emergency at any point in time. Diabetic ketoacidosis is one condition where the sugar levels increase and then there is hypoglycemia wherein they are administered insulin but if they have not eaten anything, the sugar levels drop which is a more dreadful condition as the patients may even lose their lives. This is why we call parents for proper counselling and train them to be their own doctors,” she said.



### NOTICE

I have changed my son name from Akash Agarwal to AAKAASH AGARWAAL S/o Vishal Krishna Agarwal 87/217 Acharya Nagar Kanpur for all future purpose.

### NOTICE

I have changed my name from TAKADIR HUSAIN to TAQDEER HUSAIN S/O MOHD JAKARIYA In future I shall be Known as TAQDEER HUSAIN S/O MOHD JAKARIYA 90/246 "A" IFTIKHARABAD Kanpur Nagar UP

### NOTICE

It is general information that I, DHARMVIR SINGH s/o RAJENDRA PAL SINGH residing at 427 SHANKAR NAGAR, SAFIPUR II, RAMADEVI KANPUR-208007, declare that my name has been wrongly written as SRI DHARMVIR SINGH in my service record. The actual name of mine is DHARMVIR SINGH respectively which may be amended accordingly.

HDFC BANK					
Head Office : HDFC Bank Ltd., HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400 013					
Branch Office : HDFC Bank Ltd, 17/4A, Nikhilesh Palace, 1st Floor Ashok Marg, Opp. Jawahar Bhawan Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001, Uttar Pradesh					
We understand your world					
DEMAND NOTICE					
DEMAND NOTICE UNDER Sec 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002.					
The following borrowers & co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from HDFC Bank Ltd. the loans of below mentioned borrowers & co-borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms & conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loans were classified as NPA's as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to HDFC Bank Ltd are mentioned in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be payable as applicable and the same will be charged with effect from their respective dates.					
Loan A/c No	Loan availed / Product	Name of Borrowers & Co-borrowers / Mortgagor	Outstanding as per 13(2)/Notice Date	Details of Secured Assets	Date of NPA
50200 60723 9550	Dropline Overdraft Facility	<b>1. M/s Dastoor Foods Private Limited (Borrower)</b> Through Its Director's Address: At - First Floor, B-153, Near Surya Hotel Zakir Bagh, Zamila Nagar, South, Delhi-110025. <b>2. Mr. Shahbaz Khan (Co-Borrower &amp; Mortgagor)</b> S/o Mr. Mohd Saeed Address At: -D-1/24, Sector-1, Aliganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226024. <b>Also, At:</b> Address: - H.N. B-1/25, B Type, Sector-f, Aliganj Joyina, Lucknow-226024, Uttar Pradesh. <b>3. Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan (Co-Borrower &amp; Mortgagor)</b> S/o Mr. Mohammad Saeed Address At: - D-1/24, Sector-1, Aliganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226024. <b>Also, At:</b> Address: - H.N. B-1/25, B Type, Sector-f, Aliganj Joyina, Lucknow-226024, Uttar Pradesh. <b>4. Mrs. Shireen Saeed (Co-Borrower &amp; Mortgagor)</b> C/o Mohd. Saeed Address: - D-1/24, Sector-1, Aliganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226024	Rs. 1,91,46,043.00/- as on 29-01-2024. / Notice Date: 02-02-2024	<b>PROPERTY NO.1</b> House Constructed On Plot Of Land No. D-1/25, Type-b, Admeasuring 3200 Sq Ft. i.e. 297.397 Sq. Mtr., Situated At Sector-f, Aliganj Scheme, Ward- Aliganj, Tehsil & Distt- Lucknow-226024, Uttar Pradesh, (property Owned By Mr. Shahbaz Khan & Mrs. Shah Nawaz Khan). <b>Bounded As Under:</b> - East : 05 Feet Wide Road (Service Road), West : 09 Mtr. Wide Road, North : Bhukhand No. B-1/25, South: Bhukhand No. B-1/24. <b>PROPERTY NO.2</b> House Constructed On Plot Of Land No. D-1/24, Admeasuring 900 Sq. Ft. Situated At Sector-i, Aliganj Scheme, P.s Aliganj, City & District Lucknow-226024, Uttar Pradesh. (property Owned By Mrs. Shireen ) <b>Bounded As Under:</b> - East : 25 Feet Wide Road West : Lane North : Plot No. D-1/23 South : Lane North : Plot No. D-1/22	28/12/2023
<b>5. Mr. Mohd Anas (Co-Borrower)</b> S/o Mr. Asjad Nafis Address: -C-30, Flat No. S-4 Friends Colony East, Srinivasapuri, South Delhi, 110065 <b>Also, At:</b> Address: -B-354, Second Floor, New Friends Colony, New Delhi, 110025					
Since the notices sent to you in the address in which you originally reside / carry on business / personally works for gain has not returned to us, we are constrained to cause this notice published. You are hereby called upon u/s 13(2) of the above Act to discharge the above mentioned liability with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc. within 60 days of this notice failing which the Bank will be exercising all or any of the rights u/ Sec 13(4) of the above Act. You are also put to notice that as per terms of Sec 13(13) of the above Act, you shall not transfer by sale, lease or otherwise the aforesaid secured assets.					
Date: 25.02.24, Place: Uttar Pradesh			For HDFC Bank Ltd., Authorised Officer		



# Youths hail govt decision to cancel exam



Youths staging protest demanding re-exam, in Lucknow

Pioneer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Following Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's announcement on Saturday morning regarding the cancellation of the police recruitment examination due to the question paper leak, candidates celebrated the decision across the state. Those who had been demanding the cancellation of the recruitment examination held on February 17 and 18, expressed their happiness and gratitude towards Chief Minister Yogi for prioritising the interests of the youth by taking this decisive action.

As soon as the announcement was made, students took to social media to express their appreciation. Numerous hashtags supporting Chief Minister Yogi gained momentum, with #YogiWithYouth emerging as the top trend. Through this hashtag, students justified Chief Minister Yogi's decision and lauded the government for prioritising the interests of the youth. Additionally, Chief

Minister Yogi's post regarding the exam cancellation quickly gained traction, reaching over 10 lakh views by 6 pm.

It is noteworthy that on Saturday, Chief Minister Yogi, demonstrating his zero-tolerance policy in cases like question paper leaks, not only cancelled the examinations but also reprimanded the officials involved in the recruitment process and issued instructions to conduct the examinations with complete transparency within six months.

After the cancellation of the Uttar Pradesh police recruitment examination, a significant number of candidates across various cities in the state, including Lucknow, welcomed it. The excited students thanked the chief minister for listening to the voice of the youth, posting "CM Yogi Zindabad" on social media platforms. A student in Lucknow remarked, "Chief Minister Yogi has taken into account the opinions of lakhs of students, and for this, we are

thankful to him. Our demand is that the Yogi government not only conduct a re-examination in a transparent manner within six months but also impose strict punishment on those responsible for leaking the paper."

Another student posted, "The decision of Chief Minister Yogi is commendable. We hope that Yogi will continue to lead our state in the future."

Yet another student expressed happiness, stating, "UP mein ka ba, UP mein Baba ba."

Reflecting on the state government's decision, a student remarked, "The state government has made the right decision considering the future of the youth. We hope that the government will not only take steps to address the shortcomings but also conduct examinations with complete transparency and integrity."

After the paper was cancelled, several hashtags began trending on social media platform X in support of Chief

## Victory of collective fight: Rahul

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi congratulated the aspirants staging demonstrations against paper leak in the police recruitment exams and termed the government's decision to cancel it as victory of their collective fight.

Rahul posted on X (Twitter) saying, "No matter how much the government tries to suppress the truth, our rights can be won only by fighting unitedly."

Rahul Gandhi said in his post, "A big victory for student power and youth unity! The Uttar Pradesh police exam has finally been cancelled. The message is clear – no matter how much the government tries to suppress the truth, our rights can be won only by fighting unitedly."

"Those who unite will win, those who divide will be crushed," he added.

After the cancellation of the police recruitment exam, Samajwadi Party chief and former chief minister Akhilesh Yadav said that the cancellation of the UP police recruitment exam was "a victory for the youth and a defeat for the scoundrels of the Bharatiya Janata Party government."

"Earlier BJP people were saying that the papers were not leaked then how can they accept it now. This meant that officers and criminals were in collusion and the government was also keeping its hand on their heads from behind. But in the face of all the evidence, the government has been

forced to bow down to avoid a historic defeat in the elections," Yadav claimed.

Earlier Rahul Gandhi remarked that youth from Lucknow to Prayagraj had taken to the streets to protest against the alleged paper leak in police recruitment exams, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi was delivering "misleading" speeches in Varanasi.

Sharing a video on social media platform X depicting youth protesting against the paper leak in police recruitment exams, Rahul Gandhi had on Friday criticised Prime Minister Modi for lecturing them about their issues.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday demanded a CBI probe into alleged paper leak in police and other recruitment examinations in Uttar Pradesh.

In a social media post, she said the Congress had introduced recruitment legislation in the state in which provisions were made to stop paper leaks and corruption in recruitment.

"In view of the paper leak crisis, we demand that there should be a CBI inquiry into both the recent paper leak incidents and strict action should be taken against the culprits. An examination calendar should be issued in which the dates of advertisement, examination, appointments are recorded and strict action should be taken if it is violated.

She said social justice observers should be appointed to prevent corruption in reservation along with recruitment.

"To restore the confidence of the youth, all examination forms should be made free. Youth should be provided free buses and trains to appear for the exams," Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on X.

Meanwhile, more than a month after the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra started, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday joined party MP and her brother Rahul Gandhi in the yatra in Moradabad.

According to party functionaries, from Moradabad, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will accompany Rahul Gandhi as the yatra traverses through Fatehpur Sikri via Amroha, Sambhal, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Hathras and Agra.

Speaking at Moradabad, Priyanka Vadra attacked the Bharatiya Janata Party double-engine government, alleging that the problems of the public, including in the Brass City, had aggravated further instead of giving any relief to the public. Pointing towards farmers' agitation, she claimed that two years back, they were on roads and now once again they were fighting for their rights but Modi's government as usual refused to listen to them and even used force to silence their voices.

She claimed that people were voting for BJP but what they were getting in return was unemployment, inflation etc and those who dared to raise their voice, the government was using official machinery to silence them.

## ANTF strikes hard against illegal drug dealers

### 293 arrested in 2.5 years

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a major achievement for the Uttar Pradesh government in its ongoing crusade against drug dealers, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), formed under the guidance of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has filed 110 cases and arrested 293 accused in the last two and a half years.

The ANTF has confiscated approximately 11,992.99 kilograms of illicit substances worth Rs 91,62,75,500 from the possession of drug dealers during the period. Meanwhile, continuous raids are being conducted to arrest 53 wanted suspects.

It is noteworthy that the Yogi government has been successful in seizing more than 2.41 lakh kilograms of illegal drugs through raids conducted in various districts of Uttar Pradesh between the year 2020 to January 2024. Its value in the international market has been estimated at more than Rs 1,400 crore.

Additional Director General (Crime) SK Bhagat informed that Chief Minister Yogi has given strict instructions to take stringent action against those involved in illegal drug trade. In line with this, the ANTF team has been carrying out a continuous crackdown on drug dealers across the state, he added.

In 2022, the ANTF team filed cases against six gangs of illegal drug dealers, leading to the arrest of 10 individuals. During these arrests, 28.88 kilograms of illegal substances were seized, valued at Rs 3.14 crore. The ANTF also recovered Rs 7,250 in cash, one two-wheeler, four four-wheelers, one pistol and nine live car-

tridges from the possession of the suspects.

Similarly, in 2023, a case was registered against a gang of 90 illegal drug dealers, resulting in the arrest of 252 individuals, including one Nepali. Attempts are being made to apprehend 40 more suspects. The seized items included 10,369.14 kilograms of illegal substances, valued at Rs 73,85,75,500. Additionally, the suspects possessed Rs 16,86,577 cash, 23 two-wheelers, 33 four-wheelers, 13 trucks, and 100 grams of yellow metal jewellery (estimated cost of one ring is Rs 5.70 lakh).

According to ANTF IG Abdul Hamid, as of 2024, cases have been filed against 14 individuals, and 31 people have been arrested, with raids going on to arrest 13 more suspects. During these operations, 1594.97 kilograms of illegal substances were confiscated, valued at Rs 14.63 crore. Additionally, the suspects were found with Rs 18,066 cash, eight two-wheelers, four four-wheelers, and two trucks.

IG Hamid further mentioned that in the last two and a half years, the authorities have seized various illegal substances from the possession of drug traffickers, including 5.31 kilograms of morphine, 21.33 kilograms of heroin (smack), 115.80 kilograms of charas, 47.35 kilograms of opium, 6,155.87 kilograms of doka poppy straw, 5,647.341 kilograms of ganja, 1,500 bottles of codeine-containing cough syrup (100 ml each), and 135 narcotic pills. Additionally, the suspects were found with Rs 17,11,893 cash, 32 two-wheelers, 41 four-wheelers, and 15 trucks.

## Maya slams politicians bowing heads before Ravidas for gains

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati, in an obvious dig at Bharatiya Janata Party and Samajwadi Party, said "those bowing their heads before Sant Ravidas are doing so for political gains."

Mayawati, on Saturday, paid tributes to Sant Ravidas on his birth anniversary.

In a post on X in Hindi, Mayawati said Sant Ravidas' message was of dedication to humanity and public service through karma.

Sant Ravidas' message has been forgotten, she said, adding that it was not for narrow political and electoral interests but for humanity and public service.

"As a result of this, the life of the Bahujans here is full of problems," the BSP chief said, and added, "It is important to be cautious of those who bow before him (Sant Ravidas) for political gains."

In a statement later, Mayawati said, "Those who ignored Sant Guru (Ravidas) and his teachings for narrow vested interests are now bow-



ing their heads before him. Although by following his teachings, the government can ensure the welfare of the poor and crores of his followers, it is not doing so."

"In honour of Sant Guru Ravidas and to keep his memories alive, the BSP government in Uttar Pradesh had undertaken several works. These included the creation of the new Sant Ravidas Nagar district while keeping the status of Bhadohi as the district headquarters intact," the statement said.

The BSP alleged that the erstwhile Samajwadi Party government in the state changed the name of the district (Sant Ravidas Nagar) owing to casteism and political gains.

"But the current BJP government also did not restore the name (Sant Ravidas Nagar) which proves that the thought processes of both the parties are the same," Mayawati said in the statement.

The BSP chief's statement came a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a scathing attack on the opposition INDIA bloc, saying its members believe in instigating people in the name of caste and making them fight.

Born in Varanasi, Sant Ravidas was a mystic poet-saint of the Bhakti movement in the 15th and 16th centuries. Venerated as a spiritual teacher in several regions of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, he was a poet, social reformer and spiritual figure.

## Cong won't be able to open its account in UP this time: Thakur

Hamirpur (PTI): Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Saturday said the Congress will not be able to open its account in Uttar Pradesh this time as party leader Rahul Gandhi has raised a question mark on the intelligence of the people of the state. Thakur said the people of Uttar Pradesh have elected four generations of the Nehru-Gandhi family and sent them to the Lok Sabha.

Referring to Gandhi's recent drunk and addict comment on the youth of Uttar Pradesh at a rally in Varanasi, Thakur said the Congress leader has lost his senses and is not aware of what he is saying. Thakur, while talking to the media persons here, said Gandhi has hurt the honour and respect of the people of

Uttar Pradesh. The minister said the Congress has cheated the public by making false promises. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's videos are going viral among the public in which she had said that five lakh government jobs would be given to the youth in Himachal Pradesh and now Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has retracted from the statement, he added. Addressing the Tridev conference of Hamirpur BJP Mandal here earlier, the minister said the people will vote for the BJP in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections as they are fed up with the Congress' false promises.

Thakur gave a clarion call to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activists to remain united and go

in the field to expose the misdeeds of the Congress party and tell the people what the BJP led NDA had done for them during the last ten years. The BJP is a political party of workers and we will get record votes at every polling booth enabling the BJP to win 370 seats, he said. The minister said the people are aware of the false promises of the Congress, but there was a need to publicise the new schemes of the Union Government for welfare and well-being of all sections of the society. He said that the BJP had earlier won all the four Lok Sabha seats in Himachal Pradesh despite the Congress government in the state and added the party will this time also win all four seats.

Bareilly (PTI): Two undertrials, one of whom has 47 cases registered against him, escaped from the lock-up on a court premises here by cutting through the window bars, police said on Saturday. A case was registered against both the accused late Friday night and three policemen have been suspended after the incident.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ghule Sushil Chandrabhan said four teams have been deployed to nab them. Sub-Inspector (SI) Virendra Kumar said Ankit Yadav and Sachin Saini had appeared before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) and Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate III on Friday morning after they were summoned.

A total of 55 prisoners had come with them to appear before the court. After every-

one's appearance, the count started at 5.30 pm before sending the prisoners back to the jail. The SI said the policemen called the names of Ankit and Sachin several times, but to no avail. When the policemen deployed for their security reached the lock-up, both the gangsters were found missing. Two rods of the iron window in the lock-up were cut.

On receiving the information, the SSP along with SP (City) Rahul Bhati reached the spot with the police force. SSP Chandrabhan said three policemen have been suspended in the case and departmental action has been ordered against them. According to police, 47 cases including one under the Gangsters Act was registered against Ankit Yadav. A case under the Gangsters Act is also registered against Sachin Saini.

one's appearance, the count started at 5.30 pm before sending the prisoners back to the jail. The SI said the policemen called the names of Ankit and Sachin several times, but to no avail. When the policemen deployed for their security reached the lock-up, both the gangsters were found missing. Two rods of the iron window in the lock-up were cut.

On receiving the information, the SSP along with SP (City) Rahul Bhati reached the spot with the police force. SSP Chandrabhan said three policemen have been suspended in the case and departmental action has been ordered against them. According to police, 47 cases including one under the Gangsters Act was registered against Ankit Yadav. A case under the Gangsters Act is also registered against Sachin Saini.

## Training programme for CM Urban Fellows begins

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government started the training of the selected fellows under Chief Minister's Urban Fellowship Programme on Saturday to accelerate development of 100 underdeveloped urban local bodies of the state on the lines of aspirational districts.

Urban Development Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma inaugurated the training programme for CM Urban Fellows under the Aspirational City Scheme at an event organised by the Urban Bodies Directorate here on Saturday. As per the intention of Chief Minister Yogi, these fellows will help in bringing these backward local bodies into the mainstream of development. After receiving training, they will be deployed in the selected backward urban local bodies. It is noteworthy that the Chief Minister's Urban Fellowship Programme was launched for the development of backward urban local bodies through enhanced urban planning, creation of basic infrastructure, economic development, and offering livelihood opportunities to the people. Over one lakh applications were received for the position of CM Fellow, and interviews were conducted with 446 applicants based on merit by January 31. The selection

**Urban Development Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma launched the Aspirational City Planning Portal and released the guidelines related to the Aspirational City Plan on the occasion**

process for 100 CM Fellows was completed on February 12. Urban Development Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma launched the Aspirational City Planning Portal and released the guidelines related to the Aspirational City Plan on the occasion. He also provided guidance to the selected CM Fellows.

He emphasised that the Aspirational City Plan is an ambitious initiative of the Uttar Pradesh government aimed at developing 100 urban bodies as aspirational cities through basic infrastructure development, improvement in education and health facilities, and creation of employment opportunities. He urged the fellows to make their best efforts to achieve this goal. Describing it as a significant undertaking rather than a mere job to motivate the fellows, Sharma stated that the initiative would not only

benefit Uttar Pradesh, but also serve as an inspiring model for the entire country.

These fellows will not only explore the possibilities of development through 32 indicators determined in 100 backward urban bodies with a population ranging from 20,000 to one lakh, but will also present their research report to the government. The Yogi government has placed 100 urban local bodies in the aspirational category across 38 districts of the state. This includes five in Aligarh, one in Etah, one in Hathras, one in Kasganj, two in Ayodhya, one in Ambedkar Nagar, one in Barabanki, one in Sultanpur, two in Azamgarh, three in Ballia, two in Mau, two in Shahjahanpur, nine in Basti, three in Sant Kabir Nagar, four in Siddharthnagar, one in Banda, four in Bahraich, one in Balrampur, three in Gonda, six in Deoria, two in Gorakhpur, five in Kushinagar, four in Maharajganj, two in Farrukhabad, two in Kanpur Dehat, two in Lakhimpur Kheri, two in Lucknow, one in Rae Bareilly, two in Unnao, one in Bulandshahr, two in Sonbhadra, one in Moradabad, three in Rampur, three in Fatehpur, two in Kaushambi, 10 in Prayagraj, one in Prayagraj and two in Jaunpur, all classified under the aspirational urban local bodies category.

## Ayodhya's Ram temple receives donations of around ₹25 crore

Ayodhya (PTI): The newly constructed Ram temple has received donations, including 25 kg gold and silver ornament, of around Rs 25 crore in a month after the consecration ceremony on January 22, trust officials on Saturday said. Prakash Gupta, office in charge of the Ram temple trust, said the amount of Rs 25 crore include cheques, drafts and cash deposited in the temple trust's office along with those deposited in the donation boxes.

"However, we are not aware of the online transactions done directly in the trust's bank accounts," he added. Gupta said that a total of around 60 lakh devotees have had darshan since January 23.

"The devotion of Ram devotees is such that they are

donating items made of silver and gold for Ram Lalla which cannot be used in Shri Ram Janmabhoomi temple, despite this, considering the devotion of the devotees, Ram Mandir Trust is accepting jewellery, utensils and materials made of gold and silver," he said.

Gupta said the temple trust is expecting an increase in donations during the days of Ram Navami festival when about 50 lakh devotees will be present in Ayodhya. Gupta further said the State Bank of India (SBI) has installed four automatic high-tech counting machines at Ram Janmabhoomi to control the heavy inflow of cash and expected offering during the Ram Navami.

"A dozen computerised counters have been made by

the Trust to issue receipts and additional donation boxes are being kept at the temple premises by the Ram temple trust. Soon a big and well equipped counting room will be constructed at Ram temple premises," he said.

Anil Mishra, trustee of the Ram temple trust, said that for the valuation of gold and silver jewellery and precious materials received as gift to Ram Lalla, their melting and maintenance has been handed over to the Government of India Mint. Mishra said along with this, an MoU has been signed between the SBI and the Trust.

According to the MoU, the SBI will take full responsibility of collection of donations, offerings, cheques, drafts and cash and deposit it in the bank, he added.

<b>उ.प्र. आवास एवं विकास परिषद</b> कार्यालय अमीनपुर अस्पताल, विजय नगर आवास विकास विभाग, प्रभाग-4, लखनऊ-20 संस्थापित: 1993	
पत्र सं. 213 / M-6-ED-III / 37	दिनांक: 24.02.2024
<b>अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना</b>	
अधोहस्ताक्षरी द्वारा जाग्रति विहार (विस्तार) योजना संख्या-11, मेरठ के सेक्टर-5 में 33 / 11 कोठीय विद्युत उपकेंद्र के निर्माण कार्य हेतु परिषद में विद्युत/यांत्रिक कार्य हेतु अर्ह श्रेणी में पंजीकृत फर्मों से अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है, जो कि दृ-बिड प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल पर दिनांक 11.03.2024 को खोली जायेगी। शेष नियम व शर्त परिषद की वेबसाइट <a href="http://www.upavp.com">www.upavp.com</a> एवं एनआइटीसी की वेबसाइट <a href="https://etender.up.nic.in">https://etender.up.nic.in</a> तथा अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत खण्ड-लुत्तीय, उडाओ आवास एवं विकास परिषद, कानपुर के कार्यालय में देखी जा सकती है। <b>अधीनस्थ अभियन्ता (शि/सी)</b>	
<b>FORM NO. 5</b> <b>DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL</b> 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow (Area of Jurisdiction: Part of Uttar Pradesh) <b>Summons for filing Reply &amp; appearance by publication</b> <b>O.A. 951 OF 2023</b> Summons to defendant under section 19(4) of the Recovery of the Debts due to the Banks and Financial Institutional Act, 1993 read with the rule 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal procedure, Rules, 1993	
<b>ARYAVART BANK</b>	.....APPLICANT BANK
<b>VERSUS</b>	
<b>M/S BALAJI ENTERPRISES &amp; OTHERS</b>	.....DEFENDANTS
To,	
<b>DEFENDANTS:-</b>	
<b>1. M/S BALAJI ENTERPRISES</b> (Borrower) Through Its Proprietor Smt. SUNITA GUPTA Add: Vill. Banthara Bazar, Vill.- Hamirpur, Kanpur Road, Lucknow, U.P. 227101	
<b>2. Smt. SUNITA GUPTA</b> Aged about 45 years (Borrower) W/O Sri. Neeraj Gupta R/O Banthara, Sikandarpur, Pargana-Bijnaur, Tehsil-Sarajani Kanpur, Lucknow, U.P. 227101	
In the above noted application, you are required to file reply in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/ duly authorized agent after publication of the summons and thereafter to appear before the tribunal on <b>18.07.2024</b> at 10.30 A.M., failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.	
<b>REGISTRAR</b> <b>DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, LUCKNOW</b>	



# Lakhs of devotees take holy dip on Maghi Purnima



Namami Gange activists appealing to bathers to keep Ganga ghats clean, in Varanasi on Saturday

PNS ■ VARANASI

Lakhs of devotees thronged the 88-odd internationally famous ghats here to take holy dip in the sacred water of river Ganga on the auspicious occasion of Maghi Purnima on Saturday. It is expected that there will also be a rush of pilgrims when they will come here from Magh Mela in Prayagraj on Sunday. Right from morning hours, the devotees started reaching different ghats to take holy dip in the Ganga. Rush was also seen at many ghats of trans- Ganga township of Ramnagar and other nearby places, including Balua Ghat and Markandey Mahadev Dham in Kaithi located near the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Gomti. The ghats where there was

a heavy rush of devotees were Dashashwamedh, Rajendra Prasad, Ahilyabai, Assi, Sheelta, Scindia, Nagwa, Bhainsasur, Rajghat, Narad, Kedhar, Panchganga, Hanuman, Ravidas and Tulsi Ghat. After taking bath at various ghats, the devotees offered alms to the Brahmins and poor people, including beggars, as it is considered important for the festival. Rush was also seen at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham. Thousands of devotees went there after taking bath in the river Ganga from river side entry – Ganga Dwar. Elaborate security arrangements were made to avoid any untoward incident and right from the wee hours. Water Police and National Disaster Response Force personnel were seen active along with expert divers, keeping close vigil on all

the activities at the ghats. In view of the rush of devotees, the local police also imposed several traffic restrictions. Meanwhile, the activists of Namami Gange launched a cleanliness campaign at Dashashwamedh, Prayag and Rajendra Prasad ghats on this bathing festival and gave the message of keeping Ganga clean. The campaign was led by Kashi region coordinator Rajesh Shukla. The team members were cleaning the Ganga ghats after the morning rush of bathers and collected the garbage, puja article wastes etc from the banks of the Ganga and put them into dustbins. They appealed to the devotees not to throw polythene bags, puja materials etc into the river and ghats. They also performed Ganga aarti at Prayag ghat. The

bathers were made aware through loudspeakers. The activists were carrying placards with cleanliness slogans in their hands. Shukla said that during the cleaning campaign, he tried to convey the message to the people along with cleaning the Ganga. The meaningfulness of the campaign will be proved only when people start avoiding throwing filth in the Ganga and its tributaries, he added. He further said that the importance of rivers in Indian life could be gauged from the fact that places connected with religious, social, economic, business, tourism, health, agriculture, education etc were directly connected with rivers. On the occasion, city co-ordinator Bina Gupta, Ramesh Chauhan and others were also present.

## Traffic goes haywire as Kalpavasis return

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The huge rush of devotees for Maghi Purnima disrupted the city's traffic flow as massive jams occurred in various areas, including around the mela grounds. Maghi Purnima marks the departure of Kalpavasis from their camps after a month-long stay, prompting their family members to arrive at the Sangam area with hundreds of tractors and other vehicles. However, officials failed to effectively manage traffic plans, resulting in long jams on roads leading to the mela area. Despite the influx of vehicles into the mela area from rural areas surrounding Prayagraj and other nearby places, the administration appeared unprepared, focusing more on surveillance than on clearing the crowds without disrupting the daily lives of local residents. Heavy traffic and an influx of vehicles from Shastri Bridge-Alopibagh to Bairahna prompted officials to divert traffic towards Allahpur. However, Allahpur was ill-equipped to handle thousands of vehicles on its narrow streets. Consequently, the usual routes taken during bathing events were jam-packed due to the diversion, causing significant delays for commuters. The return of devotees from the mela area continued late into the night, with police only managing to clear roads in the evening after more than half of the Kalpavasis had departed. Locals remarked that such traffic jams were unprecedented, even compared to those during Kumbh and Ardha



Kumbh. Earlier, over 30 lakh devotees took the holy dip at various ghats on Saturday. In the morning, the mela area was relatively less crowded but in the afternoon, the crowd began to swell. Consequently, the number of vehicles in the area also increased, leading to challenges for the police in managing traffic. Following the bathing rituals, monetary assistance, grains and fruits were given to the poor and destitute present at the ghats. The devotees also offered prayers at various

temples, including the Bade Hanumanji Mandir at Bundhwa. Bathing rituals commenced from Friday night itself for Maghi Purnima, the fifth bathing festival of Magh Mela. Arrangements were made for bathing at eight ghats, with devotees beginning to take dips in Sangam from midnight due to full moon. Jyotirvid Acharya Devendra stressed on offering rice kheer to Lord Vishnu on Maghi Purnima, along with encouraging donations

according, particularly of white items for those whose horoscopes indicate a weak moon placement. Donations of food and clothing on Maghi Purnima are believed to bring happiness and peace to households. Maghi Purnima commenced at 3:36 pm on Friday and continued until 6:03 pm on Saturday, with the ideal time for the 'snan' considered to be during Udaya Tithi on Saturday. Devotees carrying Ganga water, calendars, Ramcharitmanas, and sacred threads began returning to their destinations after the dip. Makar Sankranti marked the beginning of the bathing festivals at the Prayagraj Magh Mela, followed by Pausa Purnima, Mauni Amavasya, Basant Panchami, and now Maghi Purnima 'snan' as the fifth festival of the month-long event. The month-long Kalpavas at the Sangam concluded with the Maghi Purnima snan, with Kalpavasis receiving religious teachings, initiations, and cherished memories from saints before departing for their respective monasteries. The crowd of bathers swelled after sunrise, with bathing and charitable activities also taking place at other locations such as Akshayavat of Ganga, Ram Ghat, Gangoli Pagoda, Daraganj, and Arail Ghat. Chanting, penance, fasting, and charity hold special significance on Maghi Purnima, prompting adherents of Sanatan Dharma to donate generously in accordance with their beliefs. After bathing, pilgrims distributed food, clothing, jaggery, ghee, fruits, etc to fellow devotees.

## Traditional gaiety marks Sant Ravidas Jayanti



Sant Ravidas Janmasthan Mandir at Seer Govardhan in Varanasi

PNS ■ VARANASI

Thousands of followers, majority of them from Punjab, thronged Seer Govardhan, the birthplace of great Dalit poet of medieval and Bhakti period, Sant Ravidas, on the occasion of his 647th birth anniversary on Saturday. The birth anniversary of Sant Ravidas fell on the auspicious occasion of Maghi Purnima. After a long time, chairman of Shri Ravidas Janmasthan Mandir Trust, Sant Niranjan Das, could not arrive here from Jalandhar in Punjab due to illness. The temple was visited by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath a day ago to offer prayers there. The prime minister had also unveiled the statue of Sant Ravidas and other projects worth around Rs 100 crore, including a langar hall. Besides, the prime minister also laid the foundation stone of Rs 62.54 crore Ravidas Park and Museum at Seer Govardhan and he had assured that both the projects would be completed in three years when the 650th anniversary of Sant Ravidas would be celebrated. For the last many days, there has been a festive scene in Seer Govardhan area near Banaras Hindu University (BHU) campus and it will continue till February 26 when the followers of Sant Ravidas who have gathered here from differ-

ent parts of the country and abroad will start leaving for their destinations. On the occasion, various religious and other programmes, including the recital of Amritbani Paath, were held. Thousands of people took prasad in the langar. The singers from Punjab were also invited to sing devotional songs. The district administration has made arrangements to provide all the basic amenities at Seer Govardhan for the convenience of the followers of Sant Ravidas. Temporary tents have been erected at the birthplace of the great Dalit poet and a grand water-proof pandal has been erected keeping the weather in view so that the followers do not face any inconvenience. The road approaching Sant Ravidas temple has been repaired and the facilities of drinking water etc have been made there to facilitate the followers who have come from outside. The temple of Sant Ravidas has been decorated with attractive lighting arrangements. In view of the birth anniversary of Sant Ravidas, the route diversion plan will remain in effect in the city from Saturday till February 26. ADCP (Traffic) Rajesh Kumar Pandey has appealed to the general public to cooperate in maintaining the smooth flow of traffic. No vehicle will be allowed to go towards Sant

Ravidas temple from Bhagwanpur turn, Ramna Chowki trisection, Harsewanand crossing, Ramnagar, Nagwa side etc. Earlier, national president of the Indian Economic Association and former vice-chancellor of Manipur University, Prof Aadya Prasad Pandey, while expressing his views in the seminar organised on the eve of the birth anniversary of Sadguru Ravidas in Seer Govardhan village, said that Sadhguru Ravidas gave birth to a new tradition of devotion and his life proved that even an ordinary person could achieve success by doing his own and charity for society with a pure heart. He quoted the famous lines of Sant Ravidas, 'Mann changa to kathoti mein Ganga'. Describing Sadguru as a great personality, Prof Pandey said that any ordinary person could become great by adopting the great seer's conduct. Referring to the naming of 'Maidagin' in Varanasi, he said when Mirabai came to meet Sant Ravidas in Kashi and told him that she was a 'dagin' (tainted), the Sadguru replied that you are not tainted but a pure soul and on this statement the place is known as 'Maidagin' locality in Varanasi. On this occasion, Mahant Bharatbhushan along with Dr Manju Dwivedi, Dev Bhattacharya, Ajay Rai and Anil also expressed their views.

## Farmer hit by truck, dies

PNS ■ KANPUR

A farmer, while checking the air pressure of his tractor's wheel, was fatally knocked down by a speeding truck in Rasoolabad police area of Kanpur Dehat on Saturday morning. As per reports, Kailash Nath (36) of Kathara was taking potatoes to a cold storage in Bilhaur. On Rasoolabad-Bilhaur road near Asalatganj village, driver Ankur asked Kailash to check the air pressure of the tractor's wheel. When Kailash Nath was doing that, he was hit by speeding truck and died on the spot. On being informed, SHO Mukesh Kumar Solanki reached the spot and sent the body for autopsy. Younger brother Ranjit filed a complaint FIR against the unidentified truck driver. The police also impounded the truck. In another incident, a motorcyclist was killed by a dumper laden with building material on Karrahi road under Barra police station late Friday night. Dumper driver sped off the scene after the incident.

Manoj Batham (38) of Yogendra Vihar was a fish vendor. He is survived by wife Gudiya, a son and a daughter. He was returning home when the tragedy struck near Bharat Gas Agency on Karrahi road. On being chased by passersby, the errant driver fled the scene, abandoning the truck. Barra Inspector Tej Bahadur Singh said the police were conducting raids to nab the absconding driver. Meanwhile, an auto driver died after being knocked down by a speeding truck in Kabrai area of Mahoba district late Friday night. The incident took place when the auto driver was returning home after dropping off passengers. Police sent the body for autopsy and launched a manhunt for the absconding truck driver. The victim was identified as Fahim Khan (45) of Dhalaitanpura, Kabrai.

## PM to lay foundation for ROB, RUBs

Prayagraj (PNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be laying the foundation for 188 rail over bridges (ROBs) and rail under bridges (RUBs) under North Central Railway through a video conference in Prayagraj, Agra and Jhansi divisions on February 26. DRM of NCR, Prayagraj division, Himanshu Badoni told mediapersons on Saturday that PM Modi would lay the foundation stone and inaugurate 554 Amrit Bharat stations. Of these, 27 Amrit Bharat stations are of North Central Railway. Of these, maximum 65 bridges are in the store of Prayagraj division. The remaining ROB and RUBs are from Jhansi and Agra divisions. PM Modi will also lay the foundation stone of 27 Amrit Bharat stations, including 10 of Prayagraj division — Sonbadra, Chunar, Mirzapur, Manikpur, Govindpur, Kanpur Anwarganj, Shikohabad, Firozabad, Mainpuri, and Khurja. The foundation stone of Phaphamau Junction of Lucknow division will also be laid by PM Modi. Modi will virtually participate in the programmes to be organised at all these stations of Prayagraj division. Apart from this, he will also lay the foundation stone of a rail under bridge near level crossing Kendriya Vidyalaya Manauri, level crossing 20 between Mandan-Unchdih in Yamunapur and rail over bridge between level crossing 29 Bhirpur-Karchhana. The PM will also lay the foundation stone of two other RUBs and ROB in Yamunapur virtually.

## Youth clubs elder brother to death

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In a shocking incident, a youth allegedly killed his elder brother to death in Ashok Nagar area under Cantt police station. The accused was rounded up by police. He was identified as Satyam Mishra (22) and the victim as Shivam Mishra (26), both sons of Sandeep Mishra, a resident of Ashok Nagar. Shivam Mishra was a third-year student of LLB while Satyam is pursuing MCom. Late on Saturday night, Satyam allegedly hit Shivam on the head with a rod while the latter was asleep, killing him on the spot. Cantonment SHO Sudheer Singh claimed Satyam was jealous of his elder brother as he was of the view that his parents loved Shivam more. Meanwhile, over a dozen

people were injured after a double-decker bus moving to Bihar from Delhi hit a motorcycle before overturning on another bike. The incident occurred in front of Rasar village under Handia police station area on Saturday morning. As per reports, Mithlesh Kumar Vishwakarma (45) and Dharmendra Kumar Vishwakarma (34) of Arai village under Handia police station were going to Vindhyachal while Virendra Kumar of Rikhipur village was also riding a bike when the mishap occurred. The ill-fated bus with 70 passengers on board overturned reportedly in a bid to avoid hitting two motorcyclists in front of Urmila Degree College on the highway in front of Rasar village. The condition of six of those injured was said to be critical.

## Parental guidance session concludes

Kanpur (PNS): Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre announced the culmination of an exclusive and enlightening parental guidance session, 'Unique Minds: Understand - Evaluate - Act'. Held in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur, the session aimed to provide invaluable insights into parenting, child behaviour observation, and classroom learning challenges. The session was organised in line with National Education Policy (NEP), which lays a significant focus on inclusive education and supporting children with special needs (CWSN). The speakers shared their expertise and knowledge with parents, educators, and stakeholders alike. Dr Braj Bhushan, Dean of



Administration at IIT-Kanpur, led the discourse, delving into the intricate dynamics of parenting, decoding child behaviour patterns, and addressing various learning challenges faced by children in contemporary times.

Dr Bhushan's insightful talk navigated through the complexities of nurturing children in today's age, emphasising the importance of keen observation, effective communication, and proactive engagement in fostering holistic child development. Clinical psychologist Pratibha Mishra shared with the gathering her expertise on specific learning disabilities (SLDs). She shed light on the nuances of SLDs, raising awareness and understanding among attendees regarding these often misunderstood challenges faced by children. Principal Bhawna Gupta extended gratitude to Dr Braj Bhushan, Pratibha Mishra, and IIT-Kanpur for their contributions towards making the session a success.

## IIT-K to launch NMTronics Centre of Excellence

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and NMTronics India Pvt Ltd have announced the partnership for launch of the 'NMTronics Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Electronics Manufacturing and Skills Development' at IIT-Kanpur. This collaboration signifies a major advancement in the synergy between industry and academia, promising ground-breaking research, technological innovation, and skill development in the field of electronics manufacturing. This initiative was formalised through the signing of an MoU by Prof Kantesh Balani, Dean of Resources and

Alumni (IIT-Kanpur), and Soni Saran Singh, CEO, founder, and managing director of NMTronics India Pvt Ltd, in the presence of IIT-K Director Prof S Ganesh. The aim of the centre is to foster collaboration in research and development while providing advanced learning opportunities through IIT-K's learning and development programmes. It will be equipped with cutting-edge technology, including a fully automated Surface Mount Technology (SMT) Line. Prof Ganesh emphasised the significance of the collaboration with the NMTronics for establishing the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Electronics Manufacturing and



(L-R) Naveen Khurana, Yogesh Suryavanshi, Soni Saran Singh, Prof Kantesh Balani, Prof S Ganesh and Prof Nilesh Badwe

Skills Development on campus and said, "It is a significant milestone in IIT-Kanpur's commitment to fostering industry-academia partnerships and delivering unparal-

leled technological expertise to students and all other stakeholders. It provides a platform for joint research, knowledge exchange, and skill enhancement, fostering an

environment conducive to innovation and technological breakthroughs. This partnership exemplifies our commitment to drive socio-economic development through cutting-edge research and industry collaboration." Soni Saran Singh said, "We are thrilled to announce the establishment of the centre on IIT-K campus. This initiative highlights our unwavering commitment to driving innovation and creating value for our customers. By partnering with IIT-K, we are harnessing the collective expertise of academia and industry to fuel technological advancements and shape the future of the electronic industry."



# Defence exports have touched ₹16,000 crore, says Rajnath

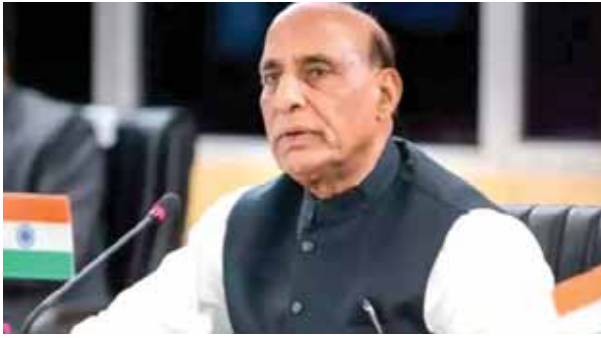
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said here on Saturday the Government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is focusing on long-term gains and not short-term outcomes to make India a developed nation by 2047.

Making this assertion here at a defence summit organised by a private media organisation, he also said defence exports have touched ₹16,000 crore. By 2028-29, annual defence production is expected to touch ₹three lakh crore and defence exports ₹50,000 crore, Rajnath added.

He said unlike in the past, the current Government has formulated and implemented policies which not only provide short-term gains for just five years.

Rajnath enumerated the



reforms undertaken in the defence sector for long-term gains in the last few years, including creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff and setting up of the Department of Military Affairs which has enhanced jointness, synergy and smooth coordination among the three Services.

Rajnath pointed out that the Government has been focusing

on the integration of the Indian Army, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, which will ensure enhanced coordination among them in times of crisis.

On the major steps taken in the field of defence manufacturing, the Defence Minister said the Defence Ministry notified five positive indigenisation lists of the Services, comprising over 500 items, and four other

lists, with over 4,600 items for DPSUs, to ensure that the soldiers use made in India weapons and platforms.

He also referred to the decision to earmark 75 per cent of the capital acquisition budget for procurement from local companies.

He said some people were of the view that indigenous weapons will not be world class, however, the government believes in the capabilities of the domestic industry and that they can consistently improve and deliver state-of-the-art products.

Rajnath was of the view that through initiatives like setting up defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the Government is making sure that modern military hardware is not only manufactured in India, but also exported to friendly countries.

# Indian warship assists merchant vessel after suspected drone attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

An Indian warship provided critical assistance to a merchant vessel after it caught fire following a suspected drone or missile attack in the Gulf of Aden, the latest in a series of such support missions in the region, navy officials said here on Saturday.

In the past few weeks, Indian Navy ships have come to the rescue some merchant vessels hijacked by pirates in the Gulf of Aden and drone attacks in the Red Sea.

The Navy has already enhanced deployment of its frontline ships and surveillance aircraft for maritime security operations in view of the maritime environment in the critical sea lanes, including in the north and central Arabian Sea.

In the latest incident, Palau-flagged vessel MV Islander came under attack on Thursday and a crew member of the ship



sustained injuries.

An explosive ordnance disposal team of the Navy embarked the vessel and sanitised it for any residual risk following which the vessel was cleared for onward transit, they said. The fresh incident comes amid growing global concerns over attacks on various commercial vessels in the Red Sea by Houthis militants.

A medical team of the Indian Navy also embarked MV Islander and provided medical

assistance to the injured crew member, they said.

In a swift response to a distress call from the vessel, the Indian warship arrived in the vicinity of the cargo ship within a few hours to provide critical support, an official said.

“Relentless efforts by Indian Naval ships reaffirms the Indian Navy’s steadfast commitment towards safety and security of merchant shipping and seafarers,” Indian Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal

said.

In the last few weeks, the Indian Navy extended assistance to a number of merchant vessels in the Western Indian Ocean following attacks on them.

The Indian Navy, earlier this month, foiled a piracy attempt on an Iranian-flagged vessel with a crew of 11 Iranian and eight Pakistani nationals along the east coast of Somalia.

In January, an Indian warship rescued 19 Pakistani crew members of an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel after it was attacked by pirates in the east coast of Somalia.

The Navy on January 5 thwarted an attempted hijacking of Liberian-flagged vessel MV Lila Norfolk in the North Arabian Sea and rescued all its crew members.

Liberian-flagged vessel MV Chem Pluto, with 21 Indian crew members, was the target of a drone attack off India’s west coast on December 23.

# Quad reflects growth of multipolar global order: EAM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As China is asserting itself in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Saturday the Quad is a statement that others cannot have a “veto” on choices of like-minded nations and the coalition is here to stay, grow and contribute to global prosperity.

In an address at a think-tank forum, Jaishankar described the coalition of India, the US, Japan and Australia as an “overhead light” that is a “creative, flexible, nimble, responsive and open-minded” enterprise.

The Quad has largely been focusing on bolstering cooperation to ensure a free and an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific in the face of Chinese belligerence.

The external affairs minister said the Quad reflects the growth of a multipolar global order and its central approach is collaborative, and not uni-



lateral.

“All four governments have behaved differently from how they normally do. The Quad is an overhead light -- creative, flexible, nimble, responsive and open-minded enterprise. These are not adjectives we normally associate with the bureaucracy,” he said explaining the principles that the grouping stands for.

Jaishankar also said that the Quad has five messages, “One -- it reflects the growth of a multipolar order; two -- it is post-alliance and post-Cold War thinking; three -- it is against spheres of influence; four -- it expresses the democ-

ratizing of the global space and a collaborative, not unilateral approach and five -- it is a statement that in this day and age, others cannot have a veto on our choices,” he said.

He noted that the Quad is facilitated by the emergence of the Indo Pacific, adding it is propelled by a change in the global order that requires “more” and “not less collaboration.”

The external affairs minister asserted that the Quad “is here to stay, the quad is here to grow and the quad is here to contribute,” calling for making it more contemporary, relevant

and more impactful.

Joining through virtual mode, Australia Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Quad stands for a region that is free from intimidation and coercion,” where competition is managed responsibly and disputes are settled in accordance with international law.

Japanese foreign minister Yoko Kamikawa, in a brief video message, said the world is facing deep divisions and it is necessary to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

“For this reason, Japan with its allies and like-minded countries is working to further develop a free and open indo-Pacific based on the rule of law,” she said.

“Quad is one of the most important initiatives to this end, has steadily implemented initiatives in maritime critical and emerging technologies, cyber and counter-terrorism, initiatives must continue to move forward,” she added.

US deputy secretary of state

Kurt Campbell said the Indo-Pacific remains the world’s most dynamic and rapidly evolving region and that the strength of the Quad is its ability to harness the capabilities and resources of the four nations together to deliver concrete outcomes that benefit all.

Campbell spoke virtually on behalf of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. “I want to emphasise the defining feature of our partnership -- the Quad stands for an affirmative vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific in which we collectively build the capacity of our allies and partners,” he said.

“Quad not about forcing the region to choose between strategic competitors, it is about preserving and creating options so that communities, institutions and countries can make decisions to benefit their people,” he said.

In his remarks, Jaishankar also asserted that there should be no doubt about ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) centrality in the Indo-Pacific.

# Modi to launch ₹52,250 crore health, road projects in Gujarat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be in Gujarat on February 24 and 25 and will launch a slew of development projects worth over Rs 52,250 crore related to health, road, rail, energy and tourism across the country.

In a significant step towards strengthening tertiary healthcare in the country, the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) said, Modi will inaugurate five All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rajkot (Gujarat), Bathinda (Punjab), Raebareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Kalyani (West Bengal) and Mangalagiri (Andhra Pradesh).

He will inaugurate these facilities at a public function in Rajkot. At a function in Dwarka, the prime minister will inaugurate the ‘Sudarshan Setu’ connecting the Okha mainland and the Beyt Dwarka island built at a cost of around Rs 980 crore. The 2.32 km-long cable-

stayed bridge is the longest of its kind in the country, the PMO said in a statement.

Sudarshan Setu boasts a unique design, featuring a footpath adorned with verses from the Bhagavad Gita and images of Lord Krishna on both sides, it said. It also has solar panels installed on the upper portions of the footpath, generating one megawatt of electricity, the statement said. Before the construction of the bridge, pilgrims had to rely on boat transport to reach Beyt Dwarka.

Among other projects, Modi will inaugurate a pipeline project at Vadinar involving the replacement of existing offshore lines, abandoning the existing pipeline end manifold (PLEM), and relocating the entire system to a nearby new location. During the visit to his home state, Modi will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 200 healthcare infrastructure projects worth over Rs 11,500 crore across 23 states and Union territories.

He will inaugurate a medical college of JIPMER at Karaikal, Puducherry, and a 300-bed satellite centre of the Post Graduate Institute of Medical and Educational Research (PGIMER) in Sangrur, Punjab, among many other health projects spread across the country, the statement said.

The 250-bed National Institute of Naturopathy named ‘Nisarg Gram’ in Pune will also be inaugurated.

In a step to boost the production of renewable energy in the region, the prime minister will lay the foundation stone of various renewable energy projects, including the 300 MW Bhuj-II solar power project, grid-connected 600 MW solar PV power project, Khavda solar power project and the 200 MW Dayapur-II wind energy project among others.

He will lay the foundation stone of the new Mundra-Panipat pipeline project worth over Rs 9,000 crore as well, according to the statement.

# EC plugs transfer, posting loopholes

From Page 1

Addressing reporters on the concerns raised by political parties, he noted, “most political parties are advocating for single-phase polling and have called for measures to reduce the influence of money power during the elections.”

“We met with various political parties, both national such as the BJP, INC, and state parties like the AIADMK, DMK. The majority of their demands were for single-phase elections and measures to curb the distribution of money and freebies,” he said.

The parties also called for action to prevent ‘voter impersonation,’ distribution of liquor, and transfer of money through online modes. During past elections in Tamil Nadu, parties have often accused each other of ‘inducing’ voters by distributing cash and gifts. They also sought the disqualification of candidates found distributing cash during the elections or engaging in any form of inducement.”

“Procedurally, they (political parties) have emphasized that the bureaucratic machinery needs to be impartial. They need to provide a level playing field so that every candidate is treated equally,” he said. According to the CEC, Tamil Nadu is home to 6.19 crore voters, of which there are 3.15 crore women and 3.04 crore men. In a communiqué to States and Union Territories, the poll

body said according to the policy all officers who were either posted in their home district or have completed three years at a place are transferred out ahead of Lok Sabha or assembly polls to ensure they do not disturb the level-playing field in favour of a candidate or a party.

“...The commission has strengthened its existing transfer policy to ensure that officials are not able to disturb the level-playing field in the elections,” the EC said in a statement on Saturday. Plugging the loopholes” in the existing instructions, the commission has directed that, except for states and union territories that comprise up to two parliamentary constituencies, all States shall ensure that officers who are transferred out of the district are not posted within the same parliamentary constituency, the EC said. The EC under Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar has told States that the policy “must be adhered to in both letter and spirit and not just being camouflaged to show compliance.”

There has been a zero-tolerance policy of the commission against disturbing the level-playing field in the elections, it pointed out. In the recently-held Assembly elections in five States, the commission had ordered transfer of various officials, including top police officials. Following the EC’s directions based on the policy, Brihanmumbai

Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner IS Chahal and Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) Commissioner Vikram Kumar are set to be transferred.

In Chennai, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that the voters have a right to know about the feasibility of fulfilling poll assurances made by political parties and made it clear that the matter is however, sub judice. Political parties have a right to make promises in their election manifestoes and the electorate has a right to know if these are genuine and how these programmes could be funded, he said, adding the entire matter forms part of an ongoing case and the matter was sub judice. The CEC said the Election Commission has prepared a ‘proforma’ to make parties to make disclosure on their election promises.

However, this aspect also relates to the pending court matter. He said enforcement agencies have been directed to stay vigilant and prevent distribution of cash and freebies. National Payments Corporation of India too has been tasked to monitor online transactions. Majority of political parties in Tamil Nadu have sought single phase polls. To a question on ‘fake news,’ he said, ‘today fake news is running as you mentioned that election dates have been announced.’ This fake news has, however, been countered within half an hour and it was made amply clear that it was fake.

# AAP, Congress ink seat sharing ties, but both to go solo in Punjab

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

At a time of challenges within the INDIA bloc, the Congress and the AAP have resolved their differences to finalise a seat-sharing agreement in Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat, Chandigarh, and Goa for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. But both the parties will go solo in Punjab. This marks the second seat-sharing deal within the INDIA bloc, following a similar agreement between the SP and Congress in Uttar Pradesh recently.

In Delhi, the AAP will contest four seats — West Delhi, South Delhi, East Delhi, and New Delhi. The remaining three — North East Delhi, North West Delhi, and Chandni Chowk — will be contested by the Congress. In the 2019 election, the BJP won all seven seats. The announcement came during a joint press conference of the AAP and the Congress.

In Gujarat, out of its 26 Lok Sabha seats, Congress will

contest 24, while AAP will contest two, including Bharuch and Bhavnagar. In Haryana, which has 10 seats, Congress will contest nine, and AAP will contest one, Kurukshetra. Extensive discussions were held regarding the Chandigarh seat, ultimately decided in favour of the Congress candidate. Detailed discussions also took place concerning Goa, with both seats being contested by the Congress,” he added.

Seat-sharing has been a major challenge for the INDIA bloc, with negotiations complicated by the aspirations of regional parties. The Congress’s recent electoral setbacks in three heartland states have emboldened these regional powers to demand a larger share of seats. Last week, the AAP had announced a candidate for South Goa but will now withdraw it to accommodate its ally. Initially, the AAP had planned to contest all 13 seats in Punjab independently.

# INDIA Bloc in tatters in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

As the TMC has reiterated to go it alone in the Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal, the State Congress said it is in talks with the CPI(M) for seat sharing in the State. The Congress, the TMC and the CPI(M) are constituents of the Opposition INDIA bloc.

Reacting to a statement by TMC leader Derek O’Brien, who claimed that the TMC’s stance towards the Congress in Bengal remained unchanged, Bengal Congress president Adhir Chowdhury on Saturday said, “I had no information about who said what... I only know that they have decided to go it alone in Bengal... But one thing is for sure: we are proceeding with our talks with the CPI(M).”

On Friday, O’Brien had reiterated that his party had not deviated from what the Chief Minister had said a month ago regarding the

alliance talks.

“A few weeks ago... Mamata said the TMC is contesting all 42 seats in Bengal. We are also contesting a few seats in Assam and the Tura Lok Sabha seat in Meghalaya. There is no change in this position,” he had said.

In Bengal, the Congress has been requesting 6-8 seats, while the TMC has offered only two seats, Behrampore and Malda South, currently held by Adhir Chowdhury and AH Khan Chowdhury.

In a sharp attack on the TMC, the PCC president highlighted how Mamata’s party was caught between losing minority votes on one side and facing ED and CBI raids on the other.

“Mamata had made it clear that her party will contest the elections alone,” he said, adding, “They (TMC) are in a dilemma because if they leave the INDIA alliance they will lose the minority votes... whereas if they don’t do so

and go ahead with the alliance then the Narendra Modi Government will send ED and CBI to their houses ... this is the reason why the TMC is vertically divided in two groups... while one section wants the alliance to continue, the other is in a dilemma.” Reminding how Mamata had declared that she would go it alone in Bengal, Chowdhury said, “Irrespective of who says what we are going ahead with our talks with the CPI(M) and I am already in the midst of seat-sharing talks with their State secretary Md Salim.”

Meanwhile the Congress national leadership, however, continued to go soft on the TMC saying their doors were still open to her.

“Our doors are always open for the TMC. Mamata and the TMC have said they want to strengthen INDIA Alliance and the biggest motive is to defeat the BJP... Heated discussions keep taking place between the two parties but we respect Mamata,” senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said.

# New criminal justice laws from July 1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The newly enacted laws — Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Act — to completely overhaul the criminal justice system in the country will come into effect from July 1.

However, the provision related to cases of hit and run by vehicle drivers will not be implemented immediately. The three laws got Parliament’s approval on December 21 and President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent on December 25.

According to three identical notifications issued by the Union Home Ministry, provisions of the new laws will come into force from July 1. The laws will replace the

colonial-era Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act of 1872 respectively.

The three legislations aim at completely overhauling the criminal justice system in the country by giving definitions of various offences and their punishments. The Government, however, has decided not to implement the provision related to cases of hit and run by a vehicle driver as promised to truckers who had protested against it.

“In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (45 of 2023), the Central Government hereby appoints the 1st day of July, 2024 as the date on which the provisions of the said Sanhita,

except the provision of sub-section (2) of section 106, shall come into force,” one of the notifications said.

After the laws were enacted the truckers had protested the provision of Section 106 (2) which provides for 10 years imprisonment and fine to those who causes death of any person by rash and negligent driving of vehicle not amounting to culpable homicide, and escapes without reporting it to a police officer.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla had said the decision to invoke Section 106 (2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita will be taken only after consultation with the All India Motor Transport Congress.

According to the Section 106 (2) of the BNS, “Whoever causes death of any person by

rash and negligent driving of vehicle not amounting to culpable homicide, and escapes without reporting it to a police officer or a magistrate soon after the incident, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description of a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.”

While replying to a debate on the three bills in Parliament, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said the focus was on delivering justice rather than handing down the punishment.

For the first time, the word terrorism has been defined in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. It was absent in the IPC. The laws have given a clear definition of terrorism, abolished sedition as a crime and introduced a new section

titled “offences against the State”. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita lists offences such as acts of secession, armed rebellion, subversive activities, separatist activities or endangering the sovereignty or unity in the new avatar of the sedition law.

Under the new laws, ‘Rajdroh’ has got a new term ‘Deshdroh’, thus doing away with the reference to the British crown. The provisions of this Sanhita shall also apply to any offence committed by any citizen of India in any place without and beyond India, any person on any ship or aircraft registered in India wherever it may be and any person in any place without and beyond India committing offence targeting a computer resource located in India.

# Draw 100 days action plan: Modi

From Page 1

“In the next 100 days, you need to connect with every new voter, reach every beneficiary, every section, every community, and every person who believes in every religion. We need to gain the trust of everyone,” Modi stated.

Emphasizing a robust return of the BJP to power, the Prime Minister said, “Today, even Opposition leaders are chanting slogans of the NDA government crossing the 400-mark. And for NDA to cross 400, BJP must surpass the milestone of 370.”



# World leaders stand in solidarity with Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Western leaders descended on Kyiv on Saturday to mark the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen travelled overnight to Kyiv by train along with Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

They arrived shortly after a Russian drone attack struck a residential building in the southern city of Odesa, killing at least one person.

Three women also sustained severe burns in the attack Friday evening on a residential building, regional Governor Oleh Kiper said on his social media account. Rescue services are still combing rubble looking for survivors. The foreign leaders are

## TWO YEARS SINCE RUSSIA'S FULL-SCALE INVASION

in Ukraine to express solidarity as Ukrainian forces run low on ammunition and weaponry and Western aid hangs in the balance.

"More than ever we stand firmly by Ukraine. Financially, economically, militarily, morally. Until the country is finally free," von der Leyen said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, after she arrived in Kyiv.

But, at the front line in the Donetsk region in eastern Ukraine, Ukrainian soldiers pleaded for ammunition.

"When the enemy comes in, a lot of our guys die. ... We are sitting here with nothing, said Volodymyr, 27, a senior officer in an artillery battery.

"In order to protect our infantry ... we need a high number of shells, which we do not have now," said Oleksandr, 45, commander of artillery unit.

The war has also come to Russia. Drones hit a steel plant in the Lipetsk region in southern Russia Saturday, causing a large fire, regional governor Igor Artamonov said, adding there are no casualties. Independent Russian media said the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Plant is the largest steel plant in Russia. Videos shared on Russian social media showed several fires burning at the plant, and an explosion could be heard.

Independent Russian news outlet Mediazona said Saturday that around 75,000 Russian men died in 2022 and 2023 fighting in the war.

Working with journalists from other outlets, it said the rate of Russia's losses in Ukraine is not slowing and that Moscow is losing around 120 men a day. Based on a statistical analysis of the recorded deaths of soldiers

compared with a Russian inheritance database, the journalists said around 83,000 soldiers are likely to have died by Saturday, the second anniversary of the full scale invasion.

According to Mediazona's analysis, regular Russian troops sustained the heaviest losses in the first months of the war.

But, after prisoners were offered their freedom in exchange for fighting and after President Vladimir Putin ordered a partial mobilization, those groups started to sustain more casualties, particularly in the early months of 2023.

A somber mood hangs over Ukraine as the war against Russia enters its third year and Kyiv's troops face mounting challenges on the front line amid dwindling ammunition supplies and personnel challenges. Its troops recently withdrew from the strategic eastern

city of Avdiivka, handing Moscow one of its biggest victories.

Earlier this month, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy fired top military commander Valerii Zaluzhnyi, replacing him with Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyy, marking the most significant shakeup of top brass since the full-scale invasion.

Russia still controls roughly a quarter of the country after Ukraine failed to make any major breakthroughs with its summertime counteroffensive. Meanwhile, millions of Ukrainians continue to live in precarious circumstances in the crossfire of battles, and many others face constant struggles under Russian occupation. Most are waiting for a Ukrainian liberation that hasn't come.

Olena Zelenska, wife of President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy, said Saturday that more than 2 million Ukrainian children have left the country since the war began and that at least 528 have been killed.

"The war started by Russia deliberately targets children," she said.

In the US Congress, Republicans have stalled \$60 billion in military aid for Kyiv, desperately needed in the short term. The EU recently approved a 50 billion-euro (about USD 54 billion) aid package for Ukraine meant to support Ukraine's economy, despite resistance from Hungary.

US President Joe Biden tied the loss of the defensive stronghold of Avdiivka in the Donetsk region after months of grueling battles to the stalled US aid. Fears have since spiked that Ukrainian forces will face similar difficulties across other parts of the 1000-kilometer (620-mile) front line as they come under mounting pressure from Russian assaults.

# Putin mocking Christianity, charges Yulia

AP ■ MOSCOW

The widow of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny accused President Vladimir Putin of mocking Christianity by trying to force his mother to agree to a secret funeral after his death in a penal colony.

Yulia Navalnaya said in a video released Saturday that Navalny's mother, who wants her son's body returned to her, is being "literally tortured" by authorities who had threatened to bury Navalny in the Arctic prison. They suggested to his mother that she does not have much time to make a decision because the body is decomposing, Navalnaya said. "Give us the body of my husband," Navalnaya said. "You tortured him alive, and now you keep torturing him dead. You mock the remains of the dead."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov rejected allegations that Putin was involved in Navalny's death, calling them "absolutely unfounded, insolent accusations about the head of the Russian state."

Musician Nadya Tolokonnikova, who became widely known after spending nearly two years in prison for taking part in a 2012 protest with her band Pussy Riot inside Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral, released a video in which she also accused Putin of hypocrisy.

"We were imprisoned for allegedly trampling on traditional values. But no one tramples on traditional Russian values more than you, Putin, your officials and your priests who pray for all the murder that you do, year after year, day after day," Tolokonnikova, who lives abroad, said. "Putin, have a conscience, give his mother the body of her son."



you murdered?"

Putin is often pictured at church, dunking himself in ice water to celebrate the Epiphany and visiting holy sites in Russia. He has promoted what he has called "traditional values" without which, he once said, "society degenerates."

Dmitry Peskov rejected allegations that Putin was involved in Navalny's death, calling them "absolutely unfounded, insolent accusations about the head of the Russian state."

Musician Nadya Tolokonnikova, who became widely known after spending nearly two years in prison for taking part in a 2012 protest with her band Pussy Riot inside Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral, released a video in which she also accused Putin of hypocrisy.

"We were imprisoned for allegedly trampling on traditional values. But no one tramples on traditional Russian values more than you, Putin, your officials and your priests who pray for all the murder that you do, year after year, day after day," Tolokonnikova, who lives abroad, said. "Putin, have a conscience, give his mother the body of her son."

## WWII-era bomb safely detonated

AP ■ LONDON

A World War II-era bomb whose discovery prompted one of the largest peacetime evacuations in British history has been detonated at sea, the Ministry of Defense said on Saturday.

The 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) explosive was discovered Tuesday in the backyard of a home in Plymouth, a port city on the southwestern coast of Britain.

More than 10,000 residents were evacuated to ensure their safety as a military convoy transported the unexploded bomb through a densely populated residential area to a ferry slipway, from which it was taken out to sea.

"I think it is fair to say that the last few days will go down in history for Plymouth," said Tudor Evans, the leader of Plymouth City Council.

# Indian mission raises Jaahnavi case with Seattle officials

## Family shocked and disappointed over decision of authorities

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India's consulate in Seattle has raised with authorities the case of Indian student Jaahnavi Kandula after the prosecution attorney said an overspeeding Seattle police officer who struck and killed her while responding to a drug overdose call will not face any criminal charges citing lack of "sufficient" evidence.

Kandula, 23, from Andhra Pradesh, was struck by a police vehicle driven by Officer Kevin Dave when she was crossing a street in Seattle on January 23 last year. He was driving 74 mph (more than 119 km/h) on the way to a report of a drug overdose call.

Kandula was thrown 100

feet when she was struck by the speeding police patrol vehicle.

In bodycam footage released by the Seattle Police Department, Officer Daniel Auderer laughed about the deadly crash and dismissed any implication Dave might be at fault or that a criminal investigation was necessary.

On Wednesday, the King County Prosecutor's Office said they would not move forward with criminal charges against Dave due to a lack of evidence to prove a criminal case beyond a reasonable doubt.

India's consulate in Seattle also said it was monitoring the progress in the case and will extend all possible support in ensuring justice for Kandula and her family.

"On the recently released investigation report of the King County Prosecution Attorney on the unfortunate death of Jaahnavi Kandula, the Consulate has been in regular touch with the designated family representatives and will continue to extend all possible support in ensuring justice for Jaahnavi and her family," the mission said in a post on X.

"We have also raised the matter strongly with local authorities, including Seattle Police for appropriate redress. The case has now been referred to the Seattle City Attorney's office for review," the post said on Friday.



It also said the mission was waiting for the completion of Seattle Police's administrative investigation and will continue monitoring the progress in the case.

Kandula's family in a statement following the announcement said: "We are shocked and disappointed that the King County Prosecutor's office has failed to criminally charge the Seattle police officer whose reckless behaviour killed Jaahnavi Kandula."

"We are pursuing our legal rights to obtain justice for Jaahnavi even though the City of Seattle has failed to do so," the statement added.

# Oil slick in Red Sea from Houthis'-hit cargo ship

AP ■ CARGO

An attack by Yemeni Houthi rebels on a Belize-flagged ship earlier this month caused an 18-mile (29-kilometer) oil slick, the US military said on Saturday. It also warned of the danger of a spill from the vessel's cargo of fertilizer.

The Rubymar, a British-registered, Lebanese-operated cargo vessel, was attacked on February 18 while sailing through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait that connects the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, US Central Command said.

The missile attack forced the crew to abandon the vessel, which had been on its way to Bulgaria after leaving Khorfakkan in the United Arab Emirates. It was transporting more than 41,000 tons of fertiliser, CENTCOM said in a statement.

The vessel suffered significant damage, which led to the slick, said the CENTCOM statement, warning that the ship's cargo "could spill into the Red Sea and worsen this environmental disaster".

"The Houthis continue to demonstrate disregard for the regional impact of their indiscriminate attacks, threatening the fishing industry, coastal communities, and imports of food supplies," it said.

The Associated Press, relying on satellite images from Planet Labs PBC

of the stricken vessel, reported on Tuesday that the vessel was leaking oil in the Red Sea.

Separately, CENTCOM said it launched attacks on Houthi-held areas in Yemen on Friday, destroying seven mobile anti-ship cruise missiles that were prepared to launch toward the Red Sea.

It described the strikes as "self-defence", saying that the missiles "presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and to the US Navy ships in the region".

CENTCOM didn't give further details. Houthi-run media, however, reported strikes by the US and the UK on the district of Durayhimi in the Red Sea province of Hodeida.

The US military has in recent weeks launched waves of strikes on Houthi-held areas inside Yemen in response to the Houthis' attacks on shipping routes in the Red Sea.

Since November, the rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea and surrounding waters. They claim to be acting over Israel's war targeting Hamas in the Gaza Strip, however they have frequently targeted vessels with tenuous or no clear links to Israel, imperiling shipping in a key route for trade among Asia, the Mideast and Europe. The targeted vessels have included at least one with cargo for Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor.

## E-chips mandatory for Everest climbers

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal will soon be making it mandatory for all climbers headed to Mount Everest to carry an electronic chip that would be helpful in rescue in case of any emergency at the world's highest peak.

The government will soon be formulating a rule for making such a chip mandatory starting from Spring this year when the climbing season starts for Mt. Everest with the opening of the narrow window available to climb extremely high altitudes.

Thousands of climbers from all over the world, including India and Nepal, are attracted to the 8,849 metres (29,032 feet) high Mt Everest, a.k.a. Sagarmatha in Nepali. While scores of them do reach the summit, some either lose their lives or are seriously injured during the ascent or descent.

Since 1953, 300 persons have lost their lives, according to Nepal government data. In the 2023 Spring season, till May 22, Nepali officials said, as many as 12 climbers, including four Nepalese, one Indian, and one Chinese, died during their respective expeditions to Mt Everest.

The Everest base camp is situated at an altitude of 18,000 feet. Any search and rescue operation from the base camp onwards to the Summit becomes a tedious job because of the snow storms, avalanches, and other extreme weather events.

"All the climbers to Everest would be provided the electronic chip by the government after paying a certain amount. It will be fitted in the climber's jacket," Rakesh Gurung, Director at the Department of Tourism told PTI.

# US senator calls on Pak authorities to probe allegations of poll fraud

PTI ■ WASHINGTON / ISLAM-ABAD

A US Senator has urged the Pakistani authorities to fully investigate the claims of vote rigging in the country's elections, emphasising that without a credible investigation, a new government will struggle to bring the Pakistani people together.

Taking to X on Friday, Senator Chris Van Hollen shared photos of a letter he wrote to Pakistan's Ambassador to the US Masood Khan on February 21 in which he praised the millions of Pakistanis who voted on February 8 in the country's elections.

The significant turnout of Pakistani people from around the country and every walk of life speaks to the fundamental role elections play in democracies around the world, he said.

"Unfortunately, these elections were marred by political violence, allegations of unfair restrictions on political expression, and accusations of vote rigging," the Democrat Senator wrote.

The junior senator from Maryland, who was incidentally born in Karachi, further said,

"The State Department agreed with international and local election observers' assessment that 'these elections included undue restrictions on freedoms of expression, association, and peaceful assembly'."

The letter also said Pakistani authorities shut down mobile telecommunications ostensibly as a security measure and the allegations made by a senior administrative official of Punjab province that he participated in fraud "converting losers into winners" and changing the results for 13 national parliament seats. Van Hollen urged Pakistan to "fully investigate the allegations of fraud and electoral interference". "Without a credible investigation, a new government will struggle to bring the Pakistani people together," he said.

Meanwhile, a high-level inquiry committee constituted by Pakistan's top electoral body on Friday said the explosive allegations of election rigging levelled by the former senior bureaucrat were "false and based on lies".

The report of the probe committee came a day after Rawalpindi's former

Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chattha on Thursday took a U-turn and withdrew his allegations, saying he had made the rigging charges at the behest of former prime minister Imran Khan's party which offered him a "lucrative position".

Khan's Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party on Friday approached the Supreme Court challenging the outcome of the elections alleging widespread rigging.

Khan has already declared the entire process as the 'Mother of All Rigging' and has been insisting that his party's mandate was stolen because of the rigging.

The party has claimed that it won 180 seats in the National Assembly by way of independent candidates backed by the party, however, the rigging ensured that the number was reduced to 92 seats only, thus robbing its chance of coming back to power.

The petition comes two days after the top court disposed of a petition seeking to annul the elections and imposed a fine on a petitioner, a former Army officer, for failing to appear in court after filing the petition.

## Iran-Pak gas pipeline gets govt approval

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government has finally approved the commencement of the much-delayed construction work on its segment of the Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline which will help address the increasing energy needs of the cash-strapped country.

The approval, which came after a delay of several years, for the first phase of the 80-km segment inside Pakistan was given by the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) of the interim government just days before the new government takes office after the February 8 elections.

"The Pakistan government has approved the start of construction work on its segment of the Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline," said an official statement.

# To escape conscription, many in Myanmar flee to Thailand

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thwel, a 25-year-old schoolteacher, saw very few options left to her after Myanmar's military announced it is implementing conscription to fill its ranks.

"As a person living in this country, I only have two options: to go abroad illegally or die here," Thwel told The Associated Press by phone while travelling to a border area to try crossing into Thailand with a small group of like-minded people.

Some observers believe a mass exodus of young talent is taking place and could become a social problem, with their exit heightening the instability that followed the military takeover that now amounts to a civil war.

Thwel, whose home in Myanmar's southern Mon state is the scene of occasional com-

bat between the army and resistance forces, spoke on condition she be called by only one name as protection from the military authorities. Like many professionals, she joined the Civil Disobedience Movement that was formed to oppose military rule after the army's 2021 seizure of power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Since then, the army's manpower has been stretched thin by increasing pressure from surprisingly durable pro-democracy resistance forces and ethnic minority armed organisations.

Over the past four months, opposition groups scored significant victories and seized strategically important territory in northern Shan state where Myanmar borders China, and in Rakhine state in the west.

On February 10, Senior

Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, chair of Myanmar's ruling military council, ordered the 2010 conscription law be activated to replenish the ranks that have been depleted by the struggle to quash a nationwide pro-democracy insurgency. All healthy men ages 18-35 and women 18-27 are required to register for two years of military service.

Evading conscription is punishable by three to five years in prison and a fine.

Of Myanmar's 56 million people, about 14 million — 6.3 million men and 7.7 million women — are eligible for military service, according to Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun, the spokesperson for the military government. The government will draft 60,000 people a year, with an initial batch of 5,000 to be called up soon after the traditional Thingyan New Year



celebration in mid-April, he said.

After an uproar over the initial announcement, Zaw Min Tun said there is no plan to call women into military service yet — meaning schoolteacher Thwel might actually be in the clear for the time being.

But many people are actively looking for ways to escape.

The street in front of Thailand's embassy in Yangon has been filled with visa applicants queued up to get numbered appointment tickets. Overwhelmed, the embassy announced it would accept

only 400 visa appointments per day, and they must be made online. According to the Thai Foreign Ministry, some 7,000 Myanmar nationals have applied for visas, Thailand's Bangkok Post newspaper reported Thursday.

Each day at the state passport office in Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, 4,000-5,000 people were lining up to get one of the 200-250 daily appointment tickets. Two women died and one was injured after they fell into a ditch in a pre-dawn rush to get a coveted early place in line.

A 32-year-old news translator from Yangon said he made a snap decision to leave the country after the conscription announcement, and flew to Thailand a few days later. Like almost all persons willing to discuss their plans, he spoke on condition of anonymity for

fear of the legal consequences.

He said he was very concerned because serving in the military is like entering a labyrinth with no way back out, giving the example of his uncle, who joined the army for a five-year enlistment but was not allowed to leave for more than 40 years.

A 26-year-old journalist who has been working covertly in Mandalay, said the conscription law made his situation untenable. He also spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of the legal consequences; more than 150 journalists were arrested after the army sized power, and more than one-third remain locked up, according to the Paris-based press freedom group Reporters Without Borders.

"I tried my best to stay inside the country in the past few years while other journal-

ists were fleeing abroad or to areas controlled by ethnic minority armed groups," he said. "But, this time, we can't hide anywhere. We can't stay out of sight. There is no choice."

He is also planning to flee to Thailand.

The Institute for Strategy and Policy, an independent think tank, said conscription could trigger a mass exodus, more widespread violations of human rights and increase corruption and extortion at all levels. It anticipates that young people close to areas where armed conflict is active could join the ethnic minority armed forces and pro-democracy resistance groups.

There were around 160,000 soldiers before the army takeover, the institute said, and there are now fewer than 100,000 due to casualties, desertions and defection.



# SWIATEK STUNNED BY KALINSKAYA IN DUBAI SEMIFINALS

AP ■ DUBAI

World No. 1 Iga Swiatek was stunned by qualifier Anna Kalinskaya 6-4 6-4 in the semifinals of the Dubai Championships. Swiatek was up 4-2 on Friday when Kalinskaya broke straight back. Swiatek's consistency began to desert her and Kalinskaya rattled off four straight games to take the first set. Swiatek saved two match points to break for 5-3 in the second and had another chance to break for 5-5 but hit wide. Kalinskaya gave Swiatek her first straight-sets loss in almost a year. The first qualifier to reach the Dubai final has defeated three top-10 players in a row, starting with No. 9 Jelena Ostapenko, then No. 3 Coco Gauff for her first top-five win, then Swiatek in their first meeting. The 40th-ranked Kalinskaya will play 26th-ranked Jasmine Paolini of

Italy in Saturday's final. It's the first WTA final for Kalinskaya and Paolini's shot at a second title, easily her biggest. Kalinskaya said the key to beating Swiatek was to stay calm yet aggressive. "I know if I don't stay calm and I don't stay aggressive she is going to destroy me," Kalinskaya said in her on-court interview. "That was my plan, to stay aggressive and move her a lot. She's unbelievable. I'm happy I had the chance to play against her. "I feel physically much better than last year. That gives me a lot of confidence to play at such a high level." The last qualifier to beat two top 3 players in a tournament was Amelie Mauresmo in 1998 in in Berlin with wins over Lindsay Davenport and Jana Novotna. Paolini held off Sorana Cirstea 6-2 7-6 (6) in their semifinal. She has beaten three top-30 players in a row for the first time. Paolini saved six set points in the



second set. "I gave you a little bit of drama at the end of the match," she said on court. Paolini and Kalinskaya have one win against each other. Kalinskaya beat Paolini just a month ago in the Australian Open fourth round. "When I played against her in Australian Open, she was also returning really deep and I couldn't start the point well," Paolini said. "She was really also consistent, not many mistakes. "If you want to beat her, I guess you have to play deep and to try to do not too many mistakes, but also to try to hit winners, to hit the ball, to push her away from the court because if not, she's going to move you." Reaching the final has assured Paolini of a top 20 debut when the rankings are updated on Monday. Kalinskaya will rise into the top 30 for the first time and could crack the top 20 with the title.



## Taha makes it to CCI Snooker Classic main draw

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Pune's Taha Khan recorded a 4-0 win against Siddharth Khemani in a best-of-7-frame final round qualifying match to make it to the main round of the CCI Snooker Classic here on Saturday. Khan raced past Khemani with a 54-43, 72-58, 58-34, 56-9 victory at CCI's Sir Wilson Jones billiards hall.

Earlier in the day, Aditya Agarwal fired two substantial breaks of 51 and 56 to beat Sameer Chabaria 3-0 (55-6, 74-16, 77-16) in the second round. In another second round contest, Vinay Swaminathan got the better of Anupama Ramchandran, charging to a 3-0 win. Chennai's Anupama, who won the U-21 title in the

Women's World Snooker Championship last year in Thailand, was beaten 91-0, 54-44, 54-30 by Swaminathan. RESULTS: Final qualifying: Suraj Veer bt Saad Sayed 4-2 (66-47, 22-81, 25-55, 58-32, 50-42, 80-42); Taha Khan bt Siddharth Khemani 4-0 (54-43, 72-58, 58-34, 56-9); Round 2: Aditya Agrawal bt Sameer Chabaria 3-0 (55-6,

74(51)-16, 77(56)-16); Shailendra Dangal bt Saqlain Mushtaq 3-2 (76-20, 30-55, 80-16, 23-59, 58-19); Rafat Habib bt Saifuddin 3-0 (73-34, 55-33, 68-54); Nalin Patel bt Rohan Pal 3-2 (22-63, 60-13 56-43, 70-87(49), 74-37); Mahesh Jagdale bt Adarsh Verma 3-0 (63-41, 66-14, 75-32); Vinay Swaminathan bt Anupama Ramchandran 3-0 (91(69)-0, 54-44, 54-30).



## Norrie beats Wild to reach Rio Open semifinals

AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Defending champion Cameron Norrie beat Brazil's Thiago Seyboth Wild 6-1 3-6 6-2 to reach the semifinals of the Rio Open. The second-seeded British player will take on either Brazil's teenage sensation Joao Fonseca or Argentina's Mariano Navone on Saturday. The 23rd-ranked Norrie became the favourite to win the clay court tournament again after Carlos Alcaraz retired with a right ankle injury and Stan Wawrinka and Nicolas Jarry were defeated. Earlier on Friday, two players from Argentina won their quarterfinal matches and will face off for a place in the final of the clay-court tournament. Fourth-seeded Francisco Cerundolo beat Serbia's Dusan Lajovic 3-6 6-4 6-4. His semifinal rival will be Sebastián Báez, who beat Brazil's Thiago Monteiro 6-4 1-6 6-2.

## Yathiraj, Pramod, Krishna in finals of Para Badminton World Championships

PTI ■ PATTAYA (THAILAND)

India's Suhas Yathiraj, Pramod Bhagat and Krishna Nagar progressed to the men's singles finals in various categories at the Para Badminton World Championship here on Saturday. World No. 3 Yathiraj, a Paralympic silver medallist, upset world no. 1 Lucas Mazur of France 21-16 21-19 in the men's singles SL4 semi-final to reach the finals for the first time in his career. Lucas is a reigning world champion and paralympic gold medallist. The 40-year-old Indian, who hails from Karnataka, is an IAS officer of the 2007 batch of Uttar Pradesh cadre. Yathiraj, who is currently the Secretary and Director General of Youth Welfare and Prantiya Rakshak Dal in the UP government, will square off

against Indonesia's Fredy Setiawan in the final. In another SL4 semifinal, Sukant Kadam lost 13-21 19-21 to Fredy Setiawan. In men's singles SL3 class, Paralympic gold medallist Pramod Bhagat outwitted fellow Indian Manoj Sarkar 23-21 20-22 21-18 and will face England's Daniel Bethell in the finals. Bethell beat India's Nitesh Kumar 21-18 20-22 21-14 in the other semifinal. In SH6 category, Krishna Nagar, a Paralympic gold medal winner, beat Vitor Tavares of Brazil 21-16 21-17 to set up a meeting with China's Lin Naili. In women's singles SU5, Manisha Ramadass beat France's Maud Lefort 19-21 21-21 14 in the semifinals to set up a summit clash against China's Yang Qiu Xia. In SH6 women's doubles,

Rachana Shaileshkumar and Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan also entered the finals with a 21-16 21-17 win over Indonesian pair of Daria Bujnicka and Oliwia Szmigiel. The men's doubles pair of Chirag baretha and Raj Kumar, and women's combination of Mandeep kaur and Manisha Ramadass, advanced to the semifinals of SU5 and SL3-SU5 class to assure medals for themselves in the tournament. Among others, Nithye Sre, Palak Kohli and Manisha Girishchandra lost their respective semifinals in SH6, SL4 and SL3 class in women's singles to sign off with bronze medals. Pramod and Sukant also settled for bronze in men's doubles SL3-SL4 after losing 16-21 16-21 to Thai pair of Mongkhon Bunsun and Siripong Teamarrom.

## Diksha 4th, Pranavi 13th in Morocco after second round



PTI ■ RABAT (MOROCCO)

Diksha Dagar placed herself for a good finish as she moved into the tied fourth spot at the end of the second round of the Lalla Meryem Cup on the Ladies European Tour here on Saturday. Diksha, third on the LET Order of Merit in 2023, shot 2-under 73 and moved to 4-under 142 total. Fellow Indian Pranavi Urs, playing her first full season on the LET, seemed set for a high position after the second hole as she

was 3-under through the front nine and 5-under for the event at that stage. Pranavi then dropped a double bogey on the 14th and a bogey on the 17th to drop back to even par 73. At 2-under total, she was tied 13th at the Par-73 Royal Golf Dar Es Salam course. Mexico's Maria Fassi continued to dominate the event after producing a strong second round of 69 (-4). Fassi has held the lead since the start of the tournament carding a round of 65 (-8) on day one.



## Nagal handed wildcard for Dubai Championship main draw

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian tennis star Sumit Nagal has received a wildcard for the main draw of the Dubai Championship, an ATP 500 event. While the qualifiers of the tournament began on Saturday, the main draw matches get underway on Monday. Nagal will be up against Lorenzo Sonego of Italy, currently world number 49, in the opening round. The 26-year-old Indian has had a remarkable run this year, qualifying for the main draw of the Australian Open last month, where he made it to Round 2 after beating Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan. He became the first Indian since 1989 to

knock off a seeded player in a Grand Slam. He attained his career-high ranking of 98 earlier this month, but dropped to 101st, despite having won the Chennai Open last week, an ATP Challenger event. As for the Dubai Championship, Daniil Medvedev of Russia is the top seed, followed by his fellow countryman Andrey Rublev, Hubert Hurkacz of Poland, Karen Khachanov of Russia, Ugo Humbert and Adrian Mannarino of France, Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan and Alejandro Davidovich Fokina of Spain. Other players who were handed wildcards include Gael Monfils of France and Abedallah Shelbayh of Jordan.

## Leverkusen extends Bundesliga lead to 11 points

AP ■ BERLIN

Granit Xhaka scored his first goal for Bayer Leverkusen as the Bundesliga leader defeated Mainz 2-1 and set a German record of 33 games unbeaten across all competitions. Leverkusen, which hasn't lost a match since last season, stretched its lead to 11 points before 11-time defending champion Bayern Munich hosts Leipzig on Saturday. Eleven rounds remain after this weekend. "We deserve to be where we are," Xhaka said. "When you're eight points, now 11 points, ahead of second-place Bayern, there is a lot to lose. But we'll keep working day by day, game by game, stay positive, and I'm sure we'll be able to keep getting our wins." The buildup to Friday's match was dominated by speculation over the future of Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso, with his former clubs Bayern and Liverpool looking for new coaches for next season. Alonso has no lack of suitors after taking Leverkusen from the relegation zone when he took over in October 2022 to a genuine title candidate in his first senior management job. "It's all just speculation, my head is totally here," Alonso repeated on Friday. "We have so much to do, we're in such a super position. So enjoying it, preparing, and that's all that's going on in my head." Supporters celebrated the German soccer league's midweek decision to scrap its plan to bring in an outside investor for



a share of media rights income by displaying a banner saying "Football belongs to the fans." They didn't have to wait long to celebrate again when Xhaka fired Leverkusen into a third-minute lead. The Swiss midfielder let fly from outside the penalty area for his first goal on his 31st appearance for the club. But Dominik Kohr replied for the visitors with a header at the other end four minutes later. Leverkusen went on to dominate possession. The home team's urgency grew toward the end of the half, when Alex Grimaldo drew a good save from Robin Zentner with a free kick. Leverkusen's frustrations grew when

Jeremie Frimpong was booked for complaining after he'd been tripped by Mainz defender Philipp Mwene when he would have been through on goal. TV replays showed there was contact. Alonso was also booked for his complaints. The frustration remained after the break as Leverkusen failed to find a way through. Then the otherwise excellent Zentner failed to hold Robert Andrich's harmless-looking shot and the ball looped in over his head in the 68th. It proved enough for the win as Mainz's hopes were hit in the 80th when Jessic Ngankam was sent off after a VAR check for a dangerous tackle on Xhaka.

## Odisha FC, Mohun Bagan Super Giant play out goalless draw

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha FC and Mohun Bagan Super Giant played out a goalless draw in the Indian Super League here on Saturday. With competitors elevating their performance levels lately, the pressure has been built on the juggernauts to not drop points in their pursuit of the top spot of the points table. Mumbai City FC equalled them in points last night with their win over Chennaiyin FC, as only a superior goal difference keeping the Sergio Lobera-coached side ahead in the race. However, they were unable to make the most of the opportunity at home against an upbeat Mohun Bagan Super Giant, who extended their unbeaten streak to five games under Antonio Lopez Habas in the ISL. Contrary to what the scoreline suggests, it was an end-to-end contest that produced umpteen opportunities for either sides to break the deadlock. A total of nine shots were taken out of which six were on target, combined for both teams, with Isak Vanlalruatfela and Albanian striker Armando Sadiku leading the charge for their respective teams. Isak, in particular, was a menace for the Mariners, coming close to bagging the first goal of the night for Odisha FC multiple times in the opening

half. He forced a mistake off Anwar Ali around the 20th minute mark and targeted the top right corner but the shot failed to trouble Vishal Kaith. He had a duel with Kaith in the third minute too, making a dazzling run on the left flank before shooting his shot at the goalkeeper who held his composure to make a critical save by staying in his line. It was not as if he lacked support from his senior striking partners Roy Krishna and Diego Mauricio. Just as the half was drawing to an end, Krishna laid up a pass for an onrushing Mauricio on the right flank. The Brazilian collected the pass in his stride before unleashing a fierce shot that deflected off the crossbar. Sadiku will be regretting not converting the several chances that came his way from close quarters. The striker had Asish Rai and Sahal Abdul Samad setting up deliveries for him both when he was at the edge of the box as well as at the centre in the 26th and 34th minute respectively. But, his efforts couldn't make it past Amrinder Singh, and so couldn't the ones made by Dimitrios Petratos just as the second half began. Even the substitutions, featuring the likes of Jason Cummings and Cy Goddard couldn't influence the proceedings abundantly to change the eventual outcome of the game.



# INDIA ON BACKFOOT AFTER JAISWAL GRITTY FIFTY

PTI ■ RANCHI

Young off-spinner Shoaib Bashir scythed through the Indian line-up with an impressive four-wicket haul that left the hosts stuttering at 219 for seven on day two of the fourth Test here on Saturday.

The 20-year-old Bashir, playing only his second Test, got rid of Shubman Gill (38), Rajat Patidar (17), Ravindra Jadeja (12) on a pitch that has uneven bounce and cracks to rattle the Indian top and middle order.

He returned after the tea break in his marathon 31-over spell across two sessions to clean up in-form Yashasvi Jaiswal (73) with a ball that skid through the defence of the left-hander.

With intermittent wickets pegging India back, they were forced to play a catch-up game and are still trailing by 134 runs. If it was not for a combative partnership between Dhruv Jurel (30 batting) and Kuldeep Yadav (17), India would have struggled to cross even 200-run mark. They had joined forces when the scorecard read 177 for seven.

The two batters played late

and did not commit early into their shots, a ply that worked well in their unbeaten 42-run stand. This was after England's first innings folded for 353 after starting the day at 302 for seven. The total could have been bigger if Ollie Robinson (58) had not attempted an audacious reverse sweep off Ravindra Jadeja.

The 22-year-old Jaiswal yet again produced a confident knock. He now has scored 618 runs with an average of 103 in this series. He looked for another big one before being done in by low bounce.

Left-arm spinner Tom Hartley returned with figures of 2/47 that included the crucial breakthrough of Sarfaraz Khan (14) who had a frustrating stay. He also survived a run-out.

India lost Rohit Sharma (2) cheaply when old warhorse James Anderson induced a faint-edge from the skipper in the third over of their innings.

But thereafter, Jaiswal showed why he is India's latest run machine when he overcame some anxious moments to post his fourth fifty-plus score in this series.

From a watchful start, India



No. 3 Gill accelerated post-lunch break, taking on Anderson with two elegant boundaries — one flick off the pads, and a punch straight back down the ground.

But Bashir gave England the breakthrough by trapping Gill, halting the fine 82-run alliance between Gill and Jaiswal. He delivered a ball that took off the crack just outside off

stump, trapped Gill on the pad as Indians reviewed unsuccessfully. It sort of triggered the Indian collapse as the batters failed to grind deep in, showing little application.

Having given a lifeline after sloppy displays in Rajkot, Patidar had a nervy and tentative stay. The only bright spot of his innings was driving down

Anderson past the gully for a boundary that brought up the 100 for India.

It was just a matter of time before Bashir trapped him with a ball that skidded onto his pads.

Post his century in Rajkot, Jadeja retained his No 5 spot and counter-attacked Hartley for successive sixes.

But Bashir was in the thick of the action again as his ball came off the cracks with Jadeja managing to loop the ball straight to short leg.

England added 51 valuable runs to their overnight total as the Indian attack failed to make early penetration. The last five England batters added 241 runs after being 112/5 at lunch on the opening day.

Joe Root, who dug in deep with his classical century spanning a little more than six hours, remained stranded on 122 from 274 balls (10x4).

Robinson gifted away his wicket after making a career-best 58 that resulted in England's first innings ending at 353. Root and Robinson's eighth wicket alliance yielded 102 runs for England.

While Mohammed Siraj (2/78) erred in his line and

length, debutant Akash Deep could not add to his tally of three wickets to return with 3/38 from 19 overs. Jadeja took all the three wickets to return with 4/67 from his 32.5 overs.

Robinson had a great start to the morning when he flicked one away from a wayward Siraj in the first ball of the day for a boundary through fine leg.

There was no stopping him as he looked for every opportunity and took on Akash Deep with three boundaries that took him past his previous career-best Test score of 42. However a bizarre shot selection ended his gritty knock as he employed a grounded reverse sweep which was not necessary at that moment as Indian bowlers were hardly troubling the visitors. The ball missed the edge of the bat but touched the gloves of Robinson before being grabbed by 23-year-old Dhruv Jurel that ended a dogged 102-run stand with Root.

England then fell in a jiffy with Bashir swinging his bat to the second ball and skied the ball to be caught at point. Jadeja trapped Anderson to end England resistance.

## Bazball is not about being arrogant but bringing best out of team: Root



PTI ■ RANCHI

Senior England batter Joe Root said Saturday that his side's 'Bazball' approach in Test cricket is not about being arrogant but about getting the best result for the team.

England's record 434-run loss to India in the third Test in Rajkot led to widespread criticism about their ultra-aggressive approach they have adopted under coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes.

"There have been times recently when the best way to do that is by being a bit more aggressive. It's like if I connect with that shot and execute it better, (Jasprit) Bumrah will be under pressure and our outlook on the game is very different again.

"It's not about being arrogant... Bazball is a word that's used a lot but that's your

word, that's not how we look at it," Root told reporters after the end of second day's play in the fourth Test here.

"It's about how can we get the best out of each other as a team, how we're going to get better as a group. You're not always going to get it right but we'll continue to keep trying to improve," Root emphasised the importance of adapting and evolving as a batter to counter the skills of world class bowlers.

"The reason I've played as many games as I have is that I've not wanted to stand still as a player, I have to try to keep evolving. If you keep on playing the same way over and over again, teams work you out, figure you out and find your weaknesses.

"They are world-class bowlers for a reason and there's a lot of information out there. So if you don't try to get better and find different ways of

scoring runs, you'll get found out.

"You're not always going to get it right but if you're not willing to make mistakes every now and then and sometimes get it wrong it doesn't matter anyway because they're still going to find you out."

Root returned to form with an unbeaten 122 from 274 balls in a classical Test match innings that helped England recover from 112 for 5 at lunch on day one to post 353.

In reply, India were 219 for 7 at stumps on Saturday, still trailing by 134 runs on a slow wicket with unusually low bounce.

"It felt like it's been a long time coming, it's been a lean series individually for me. You pride yourself as a senior player, especially with the history I've had in this part of the world, to try and make contributions that put you in

positions to win games.

"It's been disappointing but the fact I have got quite a lot of experience has been able to keep me calm and trust the stuff I am doing. The way I'm preparing meant it was going to come at some point. It was nice to do it yesterday when we were in the situation we were in at lunchtime."

**'BRILLIANT BASHIR':** Young spinner Shoaib Bashir grabbed four wickets in a marathon spell of 31 overs that spanned across all three sessions. He bowled one before lunch and then operated non-stop in the remaining two sessions with a total of 32 overs under his belt.

"The way he bowls is a great little insight into his character and personality, he is quite cheeky and great fun to be around.

"There's clearly a huge amount of skill in what he does, as he proved with the way he bowled for not just small spells but a long period of time," Root said.

"To be able to continually put pressure on some very good players of spin, I know the wicket was helpful at times, but he did an amazing job and it's a great sign for English cricket moving forward. You do have to work in partnerships and Tommy (Hartley) was excellent alongside him, too."

Root is confident that England have the edge in the match. "We've got ourselves into a nice position at the end of the first innings. Obviously, it looks like it (pitch) is going to keep deteriorating and keep getting worse.

"So if we can get three early wickets tomorrow, hopefully that puts us in a really strong position for the rest of the game," he signed off.

## Warner misses third T20I against NZ

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Dashing Australia opener David Warner is likely to be fit for the start of next month's IPL after missing the final T20I against New Zealand here due to adductor soreness.

The 37-year-old, who retired from Tests and ODIs last month, will take seven to 10 days to regain his full fitness.

"Warner will require a brief recovery period which is not expected to affect his availability for the upcoming Indian Premier League leading into to the ICC Men's T20



World Cup," Cricket Australia said in a statement.

Warner had also sat out the second T20I as part of Australia's rotation strategy. He will quit the shortest format after the conclusion of the T20 World Cup in June this year.

Warner had captained Delhi Capitals last year following Rishabh Pant's horrific accident and emerged as the highest run-scorer for the team with 516 runs, including six fifties. He was booed off the ground by the Kiwi supporters after scoring 32 in 20 balls in the opening T20 game against New Zealand in Wellington.

## Sawai Man Singh Stadium and RCA office sealed

PTI ■ JAIPUR

One month before it hosts Indian Premier League matches, the Sawai Man Singh Stadium here has been sealed by the Rajasthan Sports Council which claimed that the state cricket body did not fulfil its liabilities, including payment of dues.

Rajasthan Cricket Association's (RCA) office and its academy were also sealed, along with the stadium.

Rajasthan Sports Council secretary Sohan Ram Choudhary had served a notice to the RCA for handing over the property to the state council on Friday, but it did not happen.

Since the handover did not happen, the state sports council went on to seal the properties owing to RCA's alleged failure of not being able to fulfil its conditions as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and non-payment of dues.

"We had sent them (RCA) numerous notices but there was no reply from their end. They only replied to increase the MoU to 10 years (from eight years). They had liabilities and they did not fulfil them," Choudhary told the media.

"We have sat down with RCA to find a solution. They received approximately Rs 200 crores but told us that they haven't received the sum. They had a lot of money during the Rajasthan Premier League but they did not adhere to the MoU and did



not deposit the money, that's why we had to take this step," he added. Choudhary, however, gave the assurance that the venue will host the IPL matches and all other games that are slated to be organised here.

"This is our premise and we just took it back. The IPL matches will happen and all other national and international matches will also happen and the players will get all the facilities," he said.

RCA president Vaibhav Gehlot, on his part, alleged that the move smacked of 'political malice' and that his body was not given enough time to respond.

"The pending dues are old one, Rs 8 crore is outstanding but suddenly sealing (because of) that old case and that too

before the IPL shows political malice. This should not have happened," Gehlot said.

"We were not given full time, the time given was less than two days, there should not be politics in sports but politics is happening which is not right," he added.

Gehlot said the RCA will consult its lawyers as to what steps it would take in this matter. The Sawai Man Singh Stadium will host the local team Rajasthan Royals' opening match against Lucknow Super Giants on March 24. The second game here will be on March 28 between Rajasthan Royals and Delhi Capitals.

The IPL 2024 schedule was announced only for the first two weeks and 21 matches, owing to the general elections.

## RANJI TROPHY QUARTERFINAL

## Nair shines as Vidarbha post 460 vs Karnataka

PTI ■ NAGPUR

Karun Nair's 90-run knock was the highlight of the day as Vidarbha posted 460 all out in their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Karnataka here on Saturday.

Resuming the second day on 261 for three after Atharva Taide's century and Yash Rathod's 93, Vidarbha rode on Nair's innings to post a big first-innings total.

In reply, Karnataka were 98 for two at stumps with Ravikumar Samarth and Nikin Jose batting on 43 and 20, respectively. The visitors trailed by 362 runs.

Vidarbha lost Akshay Wadkar (16) for the addition of just 23 runs to their overnight total, and were 319 for five, when Mohit Kale (16) was dismissed by Hardik Raj.

Nair and Aditya Sarwate (26) added 55 runs before the



latter was dismissed by Vidwath Kaverappa, who picked up four wickets in all while giving away 99 runs.

Kaverappa's victims also included the all-important wicket of Nair, who fell short of his 19th first-class hundred by 10 runs.

Karnataka began their response on a jittery note, losing skipper Mayank Agarwal (0) to Aditya Thakare with just four runs on the

board. A 59-run partnership between opener Ravikumar Samarth (43 batting) and KV Aneesh (34) steadied the innings but Yash Thakur got rid of Aneesh with the score reading 63.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Vidarbha 460 (Atharva Taide 109, Yash Rathod 93, Karun Nair (90); Vidwath Kaverappa 4/99) leads Karnataka 98-2 (Ravikumar Samarth 43 batting; Yash Thakur 1/22) by 362 runs.

## Madhya Pradesh fight back against Andhra

PTI ■ INDORE

A collective bowling performance helped Madhya Pradesh stage a remarkable fightback and extend their overall lead to 83 runs at stumps on the second day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Andhra here on Saturday.

The 2021-22 winners MP resumed the day at 234 for 9 and they lost their last wicket without adding any run to their total. They had squandered a perfect start to their first innings when openers Yash Dubey (64) and Himanshu Mantri (49) put on 123 for the first wicket.

For Andhra, KV Sasikanth took 4 for 37 while Nithish Kumar Reddy returned with figures of 3/50. Shoaib Mohammed Khan and Girinath Reddy also chipped in with a wicket each as Andhra had a platform set to capitalise on the game.

But Madhya Pradesh bowlers joined forces to pull off a remarkable performance, bowling out Andhra for a mere 172 in their first innings to hand their side a 62-run lead.

None of the Andhra batters could make a mark against a probing MP bowling line-up. Andhra skipper and current Ranji season leading run-scorer Ricky Bhui was dismissed for 32 (53 balls, 5x4s, 1x6s) by Kulwant Khejroliya.

The damage, however, was done at the top by MP and India bowler Avesh Khan who removed Andhra opener DB Prashanth Kumar for a four-ball duck and also accounted for No. 3 Ashwin Hebbur for just one.

Anubhav Agarwal trapped K Revanth Reddy leg-before for 22 and also pinned India batter Hanuma Vihari for 14 in front of the wickets.



Late in the innings, Agarwal accounted for the dangerous Shoaib Mohammad Khan for 22 to return with a fine 18-6-33-3.

Left-arm spinner Kumar Kartikeya also got into the act to return 3/41 from his 19 overs, accounting for the highest-scorer of the innings Karan Shinde (38), Nithish (7) and Sasikanth (12).

The visiting side were bowled out for 172 in 68.3 overs, following which Madhya Pradesh reached 21 for no loss at stumps on the second day with an overall lead of 83 runs.

Dubey was batting on six while wicketkeeper-batter Mantri reached 50 not out with the help of three fours to make it MP's day on Saturday.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Madhya Pradesh 234 in 81.1 overs (Yash Dubey 64, Himanshu Mantri 49, Saransh Jain 41 not out; Nithish Kumar Reddy 3/50, KV Sasikanth 4/37) and 21/0 in 7 overs (Himanshu Mantri 15 not out) lead Andhra 172 in 68.3 overs (Karan Shinde 38; Anubhav Agarwal 3/38, Kumar Kartikeya 3/41) by 83 runs.

## Sai, Indrajith, Kumar hand Tamil Nadu lead vs Saurashtra

PTI ■ COIMBATORE

Skipper R Sai Kishore led by example before Baba Indrajith and Boopathi Kumar struck useful half-centuries to hand Tamil Nadu advantage in their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Saurashtra here on Saturday.

Thanks to their efforts, Tamil Nadu reached 300 for six at stumps on the second day of the match, giving them a lead of 117 runs with four first-innings wickets in hand. Resuming the day at 23 for one, night-watchman Sai Kishore (60) and opener Narayan Jagadeesan (37) managed to put on a 54-run partnership for the second wicket

before Parth Bhut trapped the latter leg-before with the team score reading 63.

The hosts were in a spot of bother at 85 for three when Pradosh Ranjan Paul (13) fell to Parth Bhut, but Sai Kishore and Indrajith (80) added 49 runs for the fourth wicket to steady the ship.

Sai Kishore, who grabbed five wickets in Saurashtra's first innings, brought up his third first-class half-century before being dismissed by Jaydev Unadkat.

Boopathi Kumar (65), along with Indrajith, then stitched an impressive 119-run stand for the fifth wicket to put their team in control.

Indrajith was looking good for what



would have been his 17th first-class hundred but Dharmendrasinh Jadeja,

the visitors' highest wicket-taker of the season, got rid of the seasoned TN batter, with the team score reading 253 for five.

For the addition 14 runs, Boopathi was cleaned up by Yuvrajsinh Dodiya.

Vijay Shankar (14 batting) and Mohamed Ali (17 batting) saw the day out as Tamil Nadu finished the day with their nose well ahead.

For Saurashtra, it has been a collective effort from their bowling unit with all five bowlers finding themselves among wickets.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Saurashtra 183 trail Tamil Nadu 300-6 (Baba Indrajith 80; Parth Bhut 2/76) by 117 runs.



"I didn't finish university, I barely finished high school. All I know is from the books I've read, and the plays that I've read"  
— Jacob Elordi



BOOKS

The New Delhi World Book Fair is a celebration of the written word that transcends boundaries bridges cultures. Here - in others counties of the world - the significance of books reverberates with resounding clarity

EXPLORING  
PAGES OF POSSIBILITY

By  
Rajdeep Pathak

As the vibrant panorama of the New Delhi World Book Fair unfolded its final chapter on February 18, 2024, it bid a fond farewell to nine days filled with the symphony of literary marvels and cultural splendour. Nestled within the expansive embrace of Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan, this majestic event, inaugurated on February 10th, played host to a multitude of nearly 15 lakh book lovers, who traversed its labyrinthine corridors in search of enlightenment and inspiration. Here, amidst the grandeur of more than 1,000 publishers hailing from 40 illustrious nations such as India, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain, and beyond, over 2,000 enchanting stalls stood as beacons of literary excellence.

Organised by the National Book Trust (NBT) under the nurturing wing of the Ministry of Education, this year's fair unfurled its vibrant banner under the resplendent theme of "Bahubhashi Bharat - Ek Jeevant Parampara" (Multilingual India - A Living Tradition). With the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia taking part as the guest country, the air was suffused with the heady aroma of cultural exchange, literary discourse, and harmonious dialogues, weaving a rich flavour of mutual appreciation and understanding between the two nations. While traversing through the stalls with long overhanging signages guiding paths for visitors, one could also wonder at the very craftsmanship of the engineers who put up the display in a manner that attracted students, school children, writers, authors, guest speakers, men and women with their families alike from far end - thanks to the event management groups of companies who designed this panoramic extravaganza, the effect was spell-binding.

However, what really attracted once again is the versatility and the imaginative and creative manner of enticing the readers/visitors and capturing (read holding on) to their interest. There were many window shoppers who just passed by. While some stalls engaged children in solving different crossword puzzles through creative games, there were others like ours (Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti), where spinning on the traditional charkha became a centre of attraction for the young and the old who wanted to try their hands on spinning. What came as a surprise in this digital age where Kindle and other such forums have become the latest fad, is that the Autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi, "My Experiments with Truth" was still a popular choice amongst the buyers.

The Children's Pavilion became a delightful sanctuary for young book enthusiasts, offering a diverse array of activities including storytelling, illustration workshops, calligraphy sessions, art demonstrations,

ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL BOOK TRUST (NBT) UNDER THE NURTURING WING OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, THIS YEAR'S FAIR UNFURLED ITS VIBRANT BANNER UNDER THE RESPLENDENT THEME OF "BAHUBHASHI BHARAT - EK JEEVANT PARAMPARA" (MULTILINGUAL INDIA - A LIVING TRADITION). WITH THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TAKING PART AS THE GUEST COUNTRY, THE AIR WAS SUFFUSED WITH THE HEADY AROMA OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE, LITERARY DISCOURSE, AND HARMONIOUS DIALOGUES, WEAVING A RICH FLAVOUR OF MUTUAL APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS



drama classes, and explorations into the wonders of space. Notably, the fair has demonstrated its dedication to inclusivity and accessibility in literature through specialized events tailored for children with special needs, in line with its overarching 'Books-for-All' initiative.

Further, amidst this vibrant mosaic of India's cultural panorama, as showcased at the World Book Fair, the symphony of myriad languages, dialects, and traditions harmoniously intertwined into a seamless expression of unity. Here, as one flapped through the pages of literature and glanced at the strokes of artistry, the feeling resonated with a profound testament to the nation's rich heritage. The unveiling of "Jaadui Pitara", an enchanting e-learning oasis, emerged as a beacon of enlightenment in consonance with the vision of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Overflowing with the treasures of puzzles, riddles, and tales, this marvelously inclusive repository, deftly translated into 22 languages through the marvels of (artificial intelligence) AI, stood poised to revolutionize the landscape of childhood education. Alongside, a constellation of specialized modules, meticulously crafted in alignment with NEP 2020, adorned this educational tableau, offering a cornucopia of resources and insights tailored to the modern learner. Embracing the noble vision of fostering a nation of avid readers, an ethereal e-library welcomed all with its boundless offerings, inviting one and all to immerse themselves in the splendour of knowledge.

In this timeless mosaic of human civilization, books stand as luminous threads weaving together the very fabric of knowledge, imagination, and cultural heritage. Like radiant beacons illuminating the path of enlightenment, books beckon us into realms of limitless discovery and profound insight. Amidst this vast literary landscape, book fairs emerge as vibrant marketplaces of intellect, where bibliophiles and seekers of wisdom converge in a harmonious symphony of literary delight.

The English author Neil Gaiman once remarked, "Literacy is more important than ever it was, in this world of text and email, a world of written information. We need to read and write, we need global citizens who can read comfortably, comprehend what they are reading, understand nuance, and make themselves understood." His words underscore the contemporary relevance of literacy in an age dominated by digital communication.

Maya Angelou, the celebrated poet and civil rights activist, aptly encapsulated the transformative power of literacy when she asserted, "Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him." She underscored the profound impact that exposure to literature can have on shaping young minds and nurturing a lifelong love for reading. Book fairs, with their wide array of offerings spanning genres and age groups, play a crucial role in instilling this habit of reading and nurturing a generation of literate and intellectually curious individuals.

Book fairs also serve as vital platforms for promoting diversity and inclusion within the literary world. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the acclaimed Nigerian author, emphasized the importance of diverse representation in literature when she said that "Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity". Therefore, by showcasing literature from diverse cultures, perspectives, and voices, book fairs contribute to a more inclusive literary landscape, fostering empathy, understanding, and interconnectedness among readers.

Book fairs, by bringing together a diverse array of literature, empower individuals to engage with various forms of written expression, thereby fostering critical thinking and communication skills essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world.

The New Delhi World Book Fair is a celebration of the written word that transcends boundaries and bridges cultures. Here - as in others counties of the world - the significance of books reverberates with resounding clarity, underscoring the enduring relevance of organizing such transformative events with new creative engagements. It is time when we move beyond just literacy...

(The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Sansthan, views are personal)



observation of life's nuances ensure that each poem feels like a deeply personal experience. These are poems to return to time and time again, each reading offering new insights and revelations. From its evocative title to its stunning cover design, *Rhythms of the Ruins* (The Brower) is a book that demands attention. Whether you are a lover of poetry or simply someone who appreciates the beauty of well-crafted words, this collection is sure to leave a lasting impression.



(The writer is retired Principal  
Chief Conservator of Forests (Head  
of Forest Force) Karnataka)





**YOUR  
WEEK  
AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

You possess a creative and diligent spirit, often applying tried-and-true methods to ensure tasks are completed efficiently and on schedule. Your focus on detail and structure means you're likely to shoulder significant responsibilities. Embrace the satisfaction that comes from overseeing projects and steering them to completion. However, cultivating consistency in personal connections will be beneficial. Expect an uptick in professional opportunities, whether through expanded business ventures, a lucrative contract, or a job proposal. While you may encounter a mix of support and skepticism from those around you, and a family member might embark on a journey, rest assured that the initiatives you've launched are progressing well. As outcomes begin to materialize, the value of enduring friendships becomes ever clearer, marking a period ripe for both personal and professional growth.

**Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour** Indigo  
**Lucky day** Monday



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

This week embarks on a journey of progress and ambition. Feel the momentum guiding you forward, reminding you that although the path ahead is lengthy, the outcome will be immensely rewarding. For some, a period of acknowledgment and praise for their contributions is on the horizon. This recognition fuels a deeper drive to excel, accompanied by a surge of personal development and resilience. Navigate this time with ease, drawing on your inner strength. However, as the week draws to a close, a challenge to your self-assurance may arise, potentially impacting your creative flow. It's a pivotal moment to reassess responsibilities, inviting collaboration to ensure continued growth. Reflecting on your aspirations and strategies will be crucial in maintaining your course towards achieving your ambitions.

**Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour** Amber  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, you find yourself enveloped in a wave of romance, setting the stage for a significant connection that could blossom into something deeply fulfilling. The period ahead hints at the beginning of a bond brimming with promise, potentially evolving into a profound and joyous union. Your adventurous spirit shines brightly, guiding you fearlessly through any situation. Adventure may call your name, suggesting a journey; however, proceed with caution and mindfulness regarding your possessions. Your proactive and resolute nature equips you to face any hurdles with confidence, while your innate tendency to offer support showcases your compassionate and altruistic side. Your empathy drives you to assist those in need, reflecting your generous spirit. Additionally, this period may bring about a notable shift in your living situation, marking a significant change in your surroundings.

**Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour** Teal  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This period marks a significant shift towards improvement in financial prospects and overall well-being. Expect an increase in your financial assets, possibly through unexpected gifts or familial contributions. With the approach of Valentine's Day, some may find themselves on the receiving end of romantic gestures, possibly including commitments of a lifelong nature. However, a segment might grapple with profound emotional challenges, experiencing feelings of remorse, unease, and sleep disturbances that disrupt the peace of night. These feelings could escalate worries and amplify perceived difficulties. Yet, as the week progresses, a newfound self-assurance in personal capabilities and talents emerges, fostering a shift from mere aspirations to tangible achievements. It's a moment ripe for transforming dreams into plans and ambitions into realities, heralding a phase of action and fulfillment.

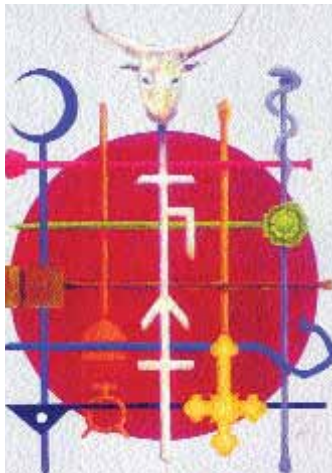
**Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour** Coral  
**Lucky day** Friday



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week is set to be a period of significant challenges and triumphs. Your determination and clear-headed approach will guide you through any adversity. With an indomitable spirit and the strength to overcome any hurdles, you embody the essence of resilience. Your leadership qualities shine brightly, inspiring those around you to seek your guidance and emulate your fair and principled demeanor. You possess the remarkable ability to influence the direction of your journey positively. For some, an opportunity to assume a pivotal role or leadership position may arise, recognizing your competence and effective communication skills. Your adeptness in navigating complex situations and your talent in articulating your vision will be key assets in this period of growth and achievement.

**Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour** Turquoise  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week may bring feelings of unease and frustration as your efforts seem unrewarded. You are on the verge of completing a significant phase, poised on the edge of achieving a goal that has demanded much from you. As the week progresses, a sense of fulfillment washes over you. Moments of joy, significant achievements, and the culmination of efforts lead to a satisfying sense of completion. This is a time for you to bask in a well-deserved break, embracing the peace and satisfaction that come with accomplishments. Your determination and creative spirit play pivotal roles in realizing your ambitions. Recognition for your hard work is on the horizon, affirming that your persistence is about to pay off. Additionally, this period holds the promise of new beginnings in personal connections, be it friendships or romantic endeavors.

**Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour** Olive  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

You embody the essence of a liberated spirit, which illuminates your vibrant emotions and boundless creativity. At your core lies a profound capacity for love, marked by kindness and a deep appreciation for calmness and harmony. Your emotional landscape is rich, occasionally touched by shifts in mood, driven by a desire to share your insightful perspectives with the world. Incorporating practices like meditation and yoga into your daily life, you access a profound level of spiritual autonomy and strength. Your innovative mindset often leads you to reject conventional viewpoints, embracing instead a fountain of fresh thoughts and artistic expressions. This balance of mind and spirit is reflected in your joy for life, especially towards the week's end when social gatherings, celebrations, and the warmth of shared victories become your focus. These moments underscore the significance of joyous times with those closest to you, reinforcing the value of community and shared happiness.

**Lucky number 15 | Lucky colour** Emerald  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week kicks off with a wave of joyous gatherings! Whether it's attending festive events, significant celebrations, or heartwarming reunions, these occasions promise an unforgettable experience. Immersing yourself in the warmth of companionship, you may find yourself reflecting deeply on life's pleasures. Indulging in delightful cuisine and the finer things, you're drawn to enhance your comfort through generous spending. However, it's a time to also be mindful of your expenditure, aiming to harmonize your desires with financial wisdom. Amidst this, a period of introspection may reveal inner truths previously unnoticed, encouraging a deeper connection with your inner essence. Embracing faith in higher principles and confidence in your capabilities will pave the way for these insights to enrich your life.

**Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour** Maroon  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

Embrace a spirit of gratitude for the myriad of blessings surrounding you, recognizing the joy in sharing triumphs with those close to you. The coming days are filled with gatherings, from joyous celebrations to communal events, offering a welcome break from daily routines and a chance to revel in the warmth of companionship. Your feelings are profound and unique, leading you to seek moments of quiet reflection midweek. A serene approach, involving quiet contemplation, will bolster your resilience. As the week progresses, you may encounter challenges that prompt introspection regarding significant changes in your approach to life or work. It becomes apparent that clinging to outdated viewpoints may hinder progress, urging a thoughtful examination of what to release in favor of growth and renewal.

**Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour** Golden  
**Lucky day** Friday



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

At the beginning of the week, you may encounter challenges in your personal connections that could leave you feeling unexpectedly wounded. This setback may initially cast a shadow over your outlook, obscuring your ability to see the situation clearly. However, as the week progresses, you'll find a renewed sense of clarity and an unexpected resilience within yourself. You'll discover that your capacity for affection has not only endured but has grown, allowing you to overcome misunderstandings and negativity with ease. This newfound strength fosters open communication and sets positive developments in motion. Additionally, professional opportunities may arise from overseas engagements, offering significant prospects for advancement. You might also experience a profound personal revelation, marking a pivotal moment of growth. Any significant hurdles that previously seemed insurmountable will now appear manageable.

**Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour** Lavender  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, you may find yourself deeply moved by your feelings, allowing your creative thoughts to soar. Your tendency to prioritize emotions over logic could lead to unrealistic expectations. Some may experience a disruption in their natural rhythms, leading to moments of frustration, yet they find solace and expression in creative or spiritual endeavors. Be wary of misleading situations or individuals, as you could be exposed to dishonesty. A sense of remorse may linger, stemming from a desire to undo past actions, yet the opportunity for change has passed. Nighttime may bring about unease, as fears and worries seem to loom larger in the quiet hours, making rest elusive. You may find yourself restless, hesitant to surrender to sleep, caught in a cycle of anxiety and reflection.

**Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour** Mauve  
**Lucky day** Monday



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

Your recent challenges and rivalries are behind you, paving the way for you to savor the fruits of your diligence. Your efforts haven't gone unnoticed, and while the acknowledgment you receive may vary in its expression, it's assuredly present. It's a signal that you're moving in the right direction, yet the journey ahead remains substantial. Embark on this path with optimism and assurance. Mindfulness in financial management is crucial; thoughtful expenditure is advised. This period may unexpectedly usher in new emotional journeys, hinting at significant life events such as welcoming a new family member. Your expenditure may reflect a playful exuberance. However, the period also promises an increase in material well-being and contentment, enhancing your overall sense of satisfaction.

**Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour** Grey  
**Lucky day** Sunday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

## Saraswati calls for being in harmony with all

Taking forward discussion from the previous issue, the first to make note of is Veena (a stringed musical instrument) in Saraswati's hands. Pleasing sound emanating from the musical instrument comes through harmony and symphony of varied sound notes excited by different strings. In an implied sense, Mother remains the beholder of all Shabda - spoken as well as written words carrying meaning. And the word carries meaning only when the letters are placed in an orderly fashion. It also implies that pleasing mannerism alone could help being in harmony with those around to enjoy a smooth run of life. Here, it will be interesting to look at the following verse, which throws light on the origin of the words with name and meaning: "Prajapatirva ida?asit; Tasya vaga Dwitiya asit, Vagvaiparama? Brahman". Literally it means that in the beginning was the Prajapati (the lord of all beings)

with whom was Vaka. Vaka is spoken of as second to Him, because She is first potentially in, and then as Shakti issues forth; and the word is Brahmana. The same concept resonates in the 4th Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". Vaka is thus a Shakti or Power of the creator. Going by ancient India's philosophic perception, the sound that got excited when the first motion at the Primal-Source happened, was the primal-sound Om. Following which, when energy streams got excited out of the seeds of creation, emerged unaccounted number of differentiated sounds. Out of them, the ones audible to human ears, are termed as root syllables (Bija mantra). 50/51 alphabets of Sanskrit are all root syllables. The harmony and symphony of these root syllables led to the making of the words with name

and form. The words inherently rest in Akasha (the space filled with eternal element of consciousness). Akasha was the first to emerge in the process of creation of the Universe, which even modern science acknowledges. That provided the ground for further evolution of the energy chains excited in the process. Akasha is supposed to hold in its womb the supra-sensual power of sound, which flowing through the air comes in touch with the vocal cord to manifest words audible to human ears. Mother, thus, metaphorically symbolises being beholder of words. The mother is perceived holding a book (the Veda) in one hand, which symbolises being beholder of eternal truth - self-revealed design parameters underlying existence. And that remains beyond the scope of individual judgment. In this context Rumi's saying becomes imperative: "Somewhere beyond right or wrong, there is a garden." One could explore



truth only with this mind-set, which calls for moving beyond the sense of duality of mind. True knowledge and wisdom can be therefore acquired only by a pure uncorrupted mind, free from any limitation whatsoever.

The Mother is shown having a rosary in another hand. It implies that repeated reflection over knowledge acquired would be needed for realisation of the true import of the subject matter of learning. So runs the verse: "Shashtra sunishcit puni-puni dekhi", which means that repeated reflection firms up our insights. She is shown moving freely in a water body, having beautiful Lotus flower around. Lotus grows out of the mud lying in water body's bed. The Lotus flower here symbolises both creativity and lustre evident with knowledge. It needs to be appreciated here that though born in muddy water, not even a drop of water or mud particle can stick to the lotus flower leaves, thus implying a sense of detachment. So, true wisdom can be acquired only when explored with a sense of detachment. Otherwise, sense of duality driving a human mind will not let you figure out the thin dividing line between truth and untruth.

A peacock is also shown around Mother, which she uses as a carrier while moving up above in the sky. We cannot afford to lose sight of the forces routed through the infinite, inaccessible and indestructible Akasha either. And, obviously tracking down the information laid down there is no easy task. It needs to be remembered here that the prized feed of a peacock is poisonous snake. When the peacock digests the snake's poison, it leads to a change in its body chemistry, which results in the beautiful colour its plumage reflects. Similarly, knowledge acquisition cannot be an easy task. Only those who take on the pains associated with learning process kindly, would be able to acquire the knowledge and wisdom, vital to turning life into a beautiful experience.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com

Now you can write to us at [agendapioneer@gmail.com](mailto:agendapioneer@gmail.com)

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Printed and Published by Shobori Ganguli for and on behalf of CMYK Printtech Pvt. Ltd., 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow-226016 and Printed at Tin Tin Printtech Pvt. Ltd., C-33 Amausi Industrial Area, Nadarganj, Lucknow. Editor-in-Chief Shobori Ganguli, Resident Editor Vijay Prakash Singh. RNI No. 2016/57. Lucknow Telephones: EPABX: 4036600 Fax: 2345582. Allahabad Office: (0532) 2420818, 2421018, 3290460. Kanpur Office: (0512) 2304006, 2304416. Varanasi Office: (0542) 2414294, 2414295. Delhi Office: 100K, Milap Bhawan, 8/A, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110 002, Phone: 011-40110455. Corporate Office:- 201-205, 2nd Floor, Pratap Bhawan 5, B.S.Z. Marg, New Delhi-110002 Phone: 011-69342500.