



OPINION 6

MASTERSTROKE OR  
POLITICAL HAKAKIRI?

WORLD 8

IMRAN, QURESHI SENTENCED  
TO 10-YEAR PRISON TERM

TRAVEL 10

FOOTLOOSE IN THE ENCHANTING  
KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

CHANDIGARH, WEDNESDAY JANUARY 31, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹2

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## POLITICAL TURMOIL IN JHARKHAND

ED likely to arrest Soren; Wife may take oath as CM

RAJESH KUMAR ■  
NEW DELHI/RANCHI

After Bihar, it is now its neighbouring State, that is heading towards political uncertainty. On Tuesday, Chief Minister Hemant Soren, who was evading questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), convened a meeting with his party leaders and ministers. His wife was also present, giving indications that Soren may hand over the baton to his family. There is also speculation that Soren could be arrested by the ED if he appears before them for questioning on January 31. In Patna, former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav on Tuesday appeared before the ED for questioning in a money-laundering case linked to the alleged land-for-jobs scam, a day after his father and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad appeared before it. Soren ended the suspense over his whereabouts after he resurfaced in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi on Tuesday, after probe agency officials failed to locate him for nearly 30 hours. The reappearance of JMM chief comes amid frenetic political developments in Ranchi and Delhi. Travelling in his official car, Soren smiled and waved at the media persons amid intense speculation of his whereabouts.



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren with JMM MLAs after paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary, in Ranchi, on Tuesday

House, Raj Bhavan and ED office, from 10 am to 10 pm, officials said.

Demonstrations, rallies or meetings cannot be held in and around these areas.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has claimed that Kalpana Soren may replace husband Hemant, and it's for this purpose only that the alliance MLAs have been instructed to remain in Ranchi. Dubey said Hemant has called all allied MLAs to reach Ranchi 'with their luggage.' In a post on X, Dubey queried how a man who is absconding will protect the people of the State.

A big piece of advice to those who are doing wrong on the instructions of Chief Minister Hemant Soren: the CM is proving himself to be a fugitive, running away from facing the investigating agency. The man is facing insults in the country and abroad all day long. How will that man protect the officers or the people of the State?" he said.

In the 81-member Assembly, JMM has 30, Congress 16, RJD 1, while the Opposition BJP has 25, Jharkhand Vikas Morcha 3, All Jharkhand Students Union 2, and others 4.

ED officials had reached his Delhi address on Monday to question him in a money-laundering case but could not locate him. The chartered plane on which he traveled from Ranchi to Delhi is parked at Delhi airport.

Soren chaired a closed-door meeting with MLAs and Ministers of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led ruling alliance and asked all the party MLAs and that of its alliance partners Congress and RJD to stay in the State capital in view of the political situation until further instructions.

Soren's wife, Kalpana Soren, was

also present amid a strong buzz that she could take up the reins of the Government if he is arrested. Earlier in the day, Governor CP Radhakrishnan who has repeatedly expressed displeasure over the "deteriorating law and order" in the State, called Chief Secretary Lalbiaktluanga Khiaunte, and Director General of Police Ajay Kumar Singh at the

Raj Bhavan here to take stock of the situation. After the meeting, the DGP said, "Elaborate security arrangements have been made across the State to maintain law and order, including deployment of an additional 7,000 policemen." Prohibitory orders have also been clamped in key areas of Ranchi, including areas near the CM

### Severe cold wave grips north India

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A bitter cold, brought on by a sharp dip in the minimum temperature across north India, compounded the woes of commuters already affected by poor visibility. The bone-chilling cold disrupted daily life across States. The 40-day harsh winter period, known as 'Chilla-i-Kalan,' ended on Tuesday with no snowfall in the plains of Kashmir and below-normal precipitation in the higher reaches of the valley. While there was light to moderate snowfall in the higher reaches at the fag-end of the 40-day period, most of the Chilla-i-Kalan, when the chances of snowfall are maximum and most frequent, remained dry. The valley witnessed a prolonged dry spell this winter, with no snowfall in the plains. During the 40-day harsh winter period, a cold wave sweeps the region, and temperatures drop considerably, leading to the freezing of water bodies and water in supply pipes. The cold conditions continue in even after the culmination of 'Chilla-i-Kalan' with a 20-day 'Chilla-i-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chilla-i-Bachha' (baby cold).

## BJP thrashes AAP, Congress in Chandigarh Mayor Polls

RAJESH KUMAR ■  
DELHI/CHANDIGARH

In a major setback to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Congress, the BJP swept the Chandigarh Mayoral polls on Tuesday, retaining the three top posts in a setback to the AAP and the Congress which had contested the elections as allies.

BJP candidate Manoj Sonkar defeated the AAP's Kuldeep Kumar for the Mayor's post,

polling 16 votes against the 12 won by his rival. Eight votes were declared invalid. BJP nominees Kuljit Sandhu and Rajinder Sharma were declared elected to the posts of senior Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor, respectively. AAP leader Raghav Chadha said they will approach the Punjab and Haryana High Court seeking fresh elections. The AAP has allied with the Congress for this civic poll — pitched as the first real



BJP's Manoj Sonkar being greeted by party councillors after he won the post of Mayor in the Chandigarh municipal corporation polls in Chandigarh

electoral test of the INDIA bloc ahead of a Lok Sabha election in less than three months' time but the alliance failed to deliver.

The loss has further weakened the Opposition group, which is already on the edge of collapse after two of its biggest members — Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool and Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) walked out. In Punjab, the AAP and the Congress have indicated that they are

reluctant to contest the Lok Sabha polls together even though they are both in the INDIA grouping. But they agreed to contest together in Mayoral elections in Chandigarh, the Union Territory that serves as the Capital of both Punjab and Haryana.

As part of the alliance in Chandigarh, the AAP contested for the Mayor's post while the Congress fielded candidates for the two other posts.

### Two CoBRA Commandos among three killed in Naxal attack

PTI ■ RAIPUR

At least three CRPF personnel, including two commandos of its elite jungle warfare unit CoBRA, were killed and 14 others injured in an encounter with Naxalites along the border of Sukma and Bijapur districts of Chhattisgarh on Tuesday, police said. Among the three slain personnel, two belonged to the CoBRA's 201st battalion and one to the CRPF's 150th battalion. The Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) is the elite jungle warfare unit of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The exchange of fire occurred near the Tekalgudem village when a joint team of security personnel was out on a search operation, Inspector General of Police Sundarraj P said. On Monday, a new camp of security personnel was set up in Tekalgudem, a Maoist stronghold along the inter-district border, around 450 km away from Raipur, he said. After setting up the camp, the personnel of the STF, District Reserve Guard and CoBRA, were carrying out a search in nearby Jonaguda-Aliguda villages when Naxals opened fire, he said.

## India saves Iran vessels from pirates

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Indian Navy came to the rescue of an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel and rescued 19 crew members, including Pakistanis, after pirates attacked the ship. Coincidentally, it was the second such effort by the Indian Navy warship INS Sumitra in the last 36 hours in the east of Somalia. The first rescue also involved an Iranian fishing vessel, Iman, on Monday. In a similar action, the Indian Navy responded to the hijacking of a Sri Lankan fishing vessel in collaboration with Seychelles defence forces and the Sri Lanka Navy, officials said here on Tuesday.



An anti-piracy operation by the Indian Navy's INS Sumitra, rescuing Fishing Vessel Al Naeemi and her Crew (19 Pakistani Nationals) from 11 Somali Pirates off the East Coast of Somalia

This action was also undertaken off Somalia. Providing details, they said a hijacking incident was reported onboard the Sri

Lankan-flagged multiday fishing trawler Lorenzo Putha 04 about 955 nautical miles east of Mogadishu, Somalia. Three pirates had

boarded and hijacked the fishing trawler on January 27. The Indian Navy deployed INS Sharada to locate and intercept the hijacked fishing vessel.

Additionally, efficient operational coordination and information sharing through the Sri Lanka and Seychelles International Liaison Officers at IFC IOR, New Delhi, resulted in the interception of the hijacked fishing vessel by SCGS Topaz in Seychelles EEZ on Monday.

The three pirates surrendered to the Seychelles Coast Guard (SCG), and all six crew members are safe, and the vessel is being escorted to Mahe, Seychelles.

## BJP walkathon yet to pick up steam

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The walkathon led by K Surendran, president of the Kerala BJP, which began in Kasaragod on January 27, is yet to garner any response from the State's electorate. The Pada Yatra (walkathon) serves as a prelude to the BJP's campaign for the upcoming Lok Sabha election and revolves around the theme "Modi's Guarantee," a term coined by the Prime Minister during his visit to Thrissur on January 3. The poor turnout at meetings addressed by Surendran highlights the fact that the Kerala BJP, without Prime Minister Narendra



Modi, lacks significant support in the State. The public meeting took an unexpected turn on Monday evening when film actor Suresh Gopi, who addressed the Kannur stretch of the Yatra, announced that the Uniform Civil Code would be implemented immediately after the results of the 2024 polls are declared.

## Bharat pays tribute to the Father of the Nation

DEEPAKJ KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

While the thoughts and vision of Mahatma Gandhi remain the wisdom for governance across the world, the paths he took around the globe are remnants that millions and millions of his followers cherish, particularly on the occasion of his martyrdom, observed as Martyrs' Day, as done on Tuesday. One such memory from the past, rarely read or known about, is the place where Mahatma Gandhi, on August 16, 1908, led 3,000 Muslims, Hindus, and Christians outside the Hamidia Mosque at Johannesburg in South Africa, where they burned their passes — documents classified as "non-white" by the Government.



President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and others pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi on Martyrs' Day, observed to mark the death anniversary of the father of the nation, at Rajghat in New Delhi

The punitive action by the British included imprisonment. The huge bonfire, lit in a cauldron, marked the first burning of passes in South Africa and the beginning of Gandhi's satyagraha, or passive resistance, campaign. The place has been built as "Truth" by senior IFS officer Anju Ranjan during her posting (2019-2023) as Consul General in South Africa and is now thronged by visitors who relive the places in South Africa where Gandhi spent his early years and transformed himself to lead India towards Independence four decades later. "I came to know about the importance of the venue where the passes were burnt by Gandhiji. With the help of locals, I managed to raise money for developing the Truth

pillar as well as the Tolstoy farm," said Anju, currently serving as Deputy Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi. The 2002 batch IFS officer was also instrumental in revamping and redeveloping the entire Tolstoy farm, including the library, among several other perspectives related to Gandhi. As per various reports, the entire area of historical importance was vandalised in the 1970s. Besides the revival of the Tolstoy farm in Johannesburg, Anju was instrumental in generating awareness, organising for 75 prominent Indian community members — a Gandhian trail (Tolstoy to Phoenix) for the first time to mark the places of Gandhian importance in South Africa.

## Ladakh prime sanctuary for endangered snow leopards

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is home to 718 endangered snow leopards, as revealed by a first-of-its-kind scientific survey spanning five years between 2019 and 2023 across the Himalayan range. The high-altitude region of Ladakh emerged as the prime sanctuary for the elusive majestic cats, boasting the highest number at 477 individuals. State-wise population estimates further indicate 124 snow leopards in Uttarakhand, 51 in Himachal Pradesh, 36 in Arunachal



Pradesh, 21 in Sikkim, and 9 in Jammu and Kashmir. The much-anticipated Status Report of Snow Leopards in India was released on Tuesday.



# Classifieds

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**I, Jarnail Singh** S/o Late Sh. Pritam Singh Ex Hav, No 4434414 expired 04-01-2020 and my mother expired 20-01-2024 R/o #418, Block D1, Wembley co-op society, Sector 91, Mohali, Punjab, declare that Ms. Harbhajan Kaur is my sister who was born from my parents on 12.06.1971 (being unmarried due to disability), at VPO Jatipur Tehsil Garhshankar, Distt Hoshiarpur, Punjab. Aadhar Card No of my sister 871849813129.

**I, Satish Kumar** S/o Darshan Kumar R/o H.No-6 Singhwala Road, Saraswati nagar, Ambala city inform that my Son Gorish is out of my control. So I disown him from my movable/immovable properties. if anybody deals with him will do so at his/her own risk.

**I, Khoobial** S/o Jeetan # 28 Ground floor Palsora Chandigarh declare That my son Umesh out of my control so I disown him from my all moveable/immovable property. anybody deal with him at their own risk.

**I, Nareesh Kumar** S/o Sh. Bal Kishan R/o H.No. 689/1, Ward No. 6, Shyam Nagar, Sonipat has disowned my son Dev Ashish from my all movable-immovable property as he is out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with him, he/she will do at their own risk.

**I Kanta Sharma** widow Parveen Sharma resident of house no. 47, Peer Colony, Neelpur Rajpura Tehsil Rajpura District Patiala evicted my son Sourav Sharma and daughter-in-law Jyoti Sharma on dated 9.09.2023 through Rozana Spokesman and the Pioneer newspaper, now they are under my control. so I reject/cancel the said exclusion.

**I, Guljar Singh** s/o Dayal Singh #05, Anand Nagar-B, Dalipgarh, Ambala Cantt declared that my son Sarbjit Singh is out of my control so I disown him from my movable and immovable properties. Please Note.

**I, Shivani Arora** w/o Inderjeet Arora #P-55, Subhash Nagar, Baldev Nagar, Ambala declared that my son Shivam Arora is out of my control so I disowned him from my movable and immovable properties. Please Note.

**I, Parwinder Singh** S/o Sh. Hardev Singh, R/o House No. 723, Sector 11, Ranjit Nagar Kharar, Tehsil Kharar District SAS Nagar Mohali Punjab inform that my son Jaspreet Singh out of my control. I disown him from all my moveable and Immoveable Properties. Anybody deals with him at their own Risk.

**I, Janardhan** S/o Sukal Paswan R/o H.No. 276, Industrial Area, Phase-7, Mohali, Punjab declare that my son Badal is out of my control. I disown him from all my moveable/immmoveable properties. Anybody dealing with him will do so at his own risk.

It is for general information that I, Nareesh Kumar S/o Dev Raj R/o H.No.150, Old Phagawa Road, Phase-1, New Defence Colony, Jalandhar Cantt, Jalandhar, Punjab 144005 declare that name of my wife has been wrongly written as Parveen in my minor daughter's namely Sandhi Kaul aged 17 years in her educational documents. The actual name of my wife is Parveen Kumari respectively which may be amended accordingly.

**We Sucha Singh** s/o Sh. Hoshiyar Singh and Parmajeet Kaur W/o Sh. Sucha Singh Both R/o Vill Salempur Sekhan, Tehsil Rajpura Distt. Patiala declares that Our son namely Gurdit Singh is out of our control and always creates disputes and disturbances in our house, so we evict above said Gurdit Singh from all of our Moveable and immoveable property. Anyone who can deal with above said Gurdit Singh, will do at their own risk. We and Our family will not be responsible for it.

**I, Surender Singh** S/o Krishan Singh, R/o #89 Street No. 4, New Sukhram Colony, Patiala(Pb) Inform that my daughter Preeti Kumari (age 20 years) is not under my control. I disown/ disinherit her from my all movable/ immovable properties. Anybody who deals with her will do at their own risk. Now I have no relation with her.

**I, Sangita Parida** Is Legally Wedded Spouse Of Army No-14841917k Rank- Hav/Mt Gopinath Pradhano, Permanent Address-1-259, Colony, Colony, Chinnla Logdi, Srikalulam, Andhra Pradesh-532213 Declare That I Have Changed My Name From Sangita Parida To Porida Sangita.Vide Affidavit No-Rd 0021346879, Dated-30-1-24

**ਮੈਂ ਨੀਲਮ ਪੁੱਤਰੀ ਜੀਓਰਿਓ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ** ਪੰਜਾਬ (ਨਾਲਗਾਂਡ) ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਸੋਲਨ (ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਪ੍ਰਦੇਸ਼) ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਦਸਵੀਂ ਸਮਾਤ ਪੰਥਾਬ ਰਾਜ ਸਕੂਲ ਸ਼ਿੰਘਾ ਬੋਰਡ, ਮਾਜਰ 2020 ਸਰਟੀਫਿਕੇਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਂਮ ਗੁਲਤਰ ਨੀਲਮ ਫਾਰੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।ਜੋ ਸਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।ਮੇਰਾ ਸਹੀ ਨਾਂਮ ਨੀਲਮ ਹੈ. ਜੋ ਸਹੀ ਨਾਂਮ ਨੀਲਮ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ।

**ਮੈਂ ਅਸ਼ੋਕ ਕੁਮਾਰ** ਪੁੱਤਰ ਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ.-12/115, ਨਿਊ ਨਹਿਰੂ, ਧਨਾਨਕੋਟ, ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਫਾ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਧਨਾਨਕੋਟ ਪੰਜਾਬ-145025, ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਰਜਨੀ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ. ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੰਗ-ਅਸਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ. ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ, ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

**ਮੈਂ ਕੁਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ** ਪੁੱਤਰ ਬਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰਬਰ-੩੬, ਗਲੀ ਨੰਬਰ-੨, ਮਹੀਲਾ ਡੇਡ ਯੂਨ ਐਵੀਨਿਊ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਰਕਾਰ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਸ਼ਬਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਹਰਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਯੂਨ. ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਚੰਗ-ਮੁਲਕ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਮੇਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Saurav Chaudhary** S/o Zile Singh R/o #51, Sector-17, Panchkula have changed my name from Saurav Chaudhary to Rohit Chaudhary.

**I, Reetu Rani** w/o Narender Kumar R/o #09, Village Bastali, District Karnal, Haryana have changed my name from Reetu Rani to Reetu. In future I should be known as Reetu.

**I, Urmila Devi** w/o Rajesh Kumar r/o Ward No.5, Nissing, Sub Tehsil Nissing Distt. Karnal (Haryana) have changed my name from Urmila to Urmila Devi. In future I should be known as Urmila Devi.

**I, Randhir Singh** s/o Tejpal Singh r/o Rajound, Sub Tehsil Rajound, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) have changed my name from Randhir Singh Rana to Randhir Singh. In future I should be known as Randhir Singh.

**I, Number 14842160Y** NK/HK Narottam Kumar Rathore S/o Late Manohar Charan Rathore #434 Gorakpur, Madhya Pradesh, declare that my mother's Savitri Rathore DOB wrongly written 01-07-1956 in my army service record. Correct DOB is 12-04-1956.

**I, Sonika W/o** Parveen Kumar R/o A1/2, Ground Floor, DLF Valley, PKUC, Sector-3, Panchkula (Haryana) have changed my name from Sonika to Sonika Malik.

**I, Rajinder Kumar** S/o Late Sh. Badri Nath Arora R/o House No. 3392, Sector 22D, Chandigarh have changed my name from Rajinder Kumar to Rajinder Kumar Arora.

**I, Sukhwinder Singh** Panjeta S/o Jasmer Singh R/o VPO Aalahar, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Sukhwinder Singh Panjeta to Sukhwinder Singh. In future I shall be known as Sukhwinder Singh.

**I, No. 6654417A** Ex Hav Baldev Singh S/o Sh. Ram Parkash, VPO Bag Mahanthan, Hariana, Tehsil & Distt. Hoshiarpur (PB). My wife's name should be amended from Kamajit to Kamla Devi and date of birth is 10-09- 1948 to 30-08- 1947 in my army record. Concern Note.

**I, Anjali D/o** Satish Kumar R/o Village Rania, Distt. Gurdaspur, Punjab have changed my name from Anjali to Anjali Nahar Concerned note.

**I, Manjeet, W/O** Baldev Singh, S/O Prem Singh, R/O Gali No. 4, Janakpuri Colony, Karnal Road, Kaithal, Tehsil And District, Kaithal, Informs That I Have Changed My Name From Manjeet Rani To Manjeet. Call Me Manjeet In Future.

**I, Rakesh Kumar** Agarwal (New Name) Son Of Sh. Radhey Lal Agarwal Resident of Flat No. E-1, Dev Bhoomi Green Valley Apartment, Deonghat, Post office Saproon, Tehsil-District Solan Himachal Pradesh declare that I have Changed my name from Rakesh Agarwal (Previous Name) to Rakesh Kumar Agarwal (New Name). All concerned Please May note.

**I, Sakshi Devender** Jain, D/o Devender Sumarchand Jain, R/o, H. No.607/24, Chander Kala Bhawan, mission Road, Sonipat, Haryana, 131001, have changed my name from Sakshi Devender Jain D/O Devender Sumarchand Jain to Sakshi Jain D/O Devender Jain for all future purposes. Concerned note.

**I, Neeraj S/o** Rajender Prasad Bansal R/O #397, Sector-6, Part-1, Dharuhera, Near Police Choki. Malpura, Distt.Rewari (Haryana) have changed my name from Neeraj to Neeraj Bansal.

**I, Balam Singh** S/O Diwan Singh Negi R/O House No-1884, Phase-2, Ram Darbar, Chandigarh have changed my name to Balam Singh Negi.

**I, Javed Ahmed** S/o Abdul Ahad Rather# 193-B, Bapu Dham Colony, Sector - 26, Chandigarh have changed my name to Javed Ahmed Rather.

**I, Manoj Singh** S/O Balam Singh Negi R/O 503 Block 1st, SBP GOD, Patiala Road, Zirakpur have changed my name to Manoj Singh Negi.

**I, Nisha W/o** Surinder Kumar #1509, 2nd floor, Sector 38B, Chandigarh have Changed my name to Kranti Devi.

**I, Rajni Khero** D/O Vikram Singh W/O Deepak Kumar # 720/15, Bapu Dham Colony, Sector 26, Chandigarh have changed my name to Rajni.

**I, Rimpy** D/o Sh. Radhe Kishan # 4783/3 sector 38 West, Chandigarh have changed my name to Rimpy Garg.

**I, Sobha** W/o Nasib Singh # 1372/1, Sector 30B, Chandigarh have Changed my name to Shobha.

**I Himmat Singh** S/o Late Mohinder Singh R/o # 875, Sector-26 Panchkula Haryana have changed my name to Himmat Singh Malik.

**I, Swarn Kaur** W/o Sh. Bhagat Singh R/o H.No. 1961/3, Behind fort, Manimajra, sector 13 Chandigarh have changed my name from Swarn Kaur to Swaran Kaur.

**I, Rosy w/o** Jasmeet Singh R/o #04, D.C. Colony, Near Modern Maruti Showroom, Meerut Road, Karnal (Haryana) have changed my name from Rosy to Rosy Singh.

**I, Rajni Devi** w/o Pardeep Singh R/O Village Kawi, Distt. Panipat have changed my name from Rajni to Rajni Devi. In future, I should be known as Rajni Devi.

**I, Jagmeet Singh** S/o Man Singh R/O Bhangwan, Kotla Gujran, Amritsar, Punjab 143606 have changed my name from Jagmeet Singh to Singh is my surname and Jagmeet is my given name.

**I, Rajesh Mittal,** S/O Prem Chand, R/O Water Workers Road, Narwana District Jind, declare that I have changed my name from Rajesh Mittal to Rajesh Kumar.

**I, Swyam Parkash** S/O Ajit Prasad House No. 13/61, Dhobi Mohalla, Karnal Haryana have changed my name from Swyam Parkash to Shammii.

**I, Jyoti Sangwan** W/o Sh. Vishal Duhann, R/O village Bhadsaun, Tehsil Indri, District Karnal have changed my name from Jyoti to Jyoti Sangwan. Jyoti and Jyoti Sangwan is same person.

**I, Sudesh Kumar** S/o Amarnath R/O 427/6, Pardhanawas, Ganaur, Sonipat declare that Sudesh Mehta & Sudesh Kumar both are my names. In future, I shall be known as Sudesh Kumar.

**I Poonam Devi** W/o Sh. Praveen Atri R/O H. No. 601, Sector 06, Hooda, Panipat, i have changed my name from Poonam Devi to Poonam Atri for all future purposes.

**I, No. 2880916,** Ex. Havdhar Suresh Kumar S/o Kapoor Singh R/o village Mandi tehsil Israna,Panipat declare that in my army service record, my name is recorded as Achhai Kumar, which is wrong. The correct name of my son is Akshay. Therefore, the correct name of my son should be changed to Akshay in the army service records.

**I, Rajeev Sarpal** S/o Raj Kumar Sarpal R/O 879, Hukam Singh Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Rajeev Sarpal to Rajiv Sarpal.

**I, Parmajeet Kaur** W/o Sukhdev Singh, House No. 5, Police Colony, Sector 13, Chandigarh have changed my name from Parmajeet Kaur to Parmjeet Kaur.

**I, Monika Rani** W/O Lalit Kumar, R/O Near Shiv Mandir, Lalru Mandi, Distt- Sas Nagar Mohali, Punjab 140501, That I Have To Change My Name Monika Ahuja To Monika Rani For All Purposes, For All Future Purposes.

**I, Roopsolony** Alias Roopsalony D/O Sh.Jagdish Karwasra R/O Vpo Nathusari Sirsa Haryana Have Changed My Name From Roopsolony Alias Roopsalony To Roop Salony

**I Manoj Kumar** S/O Dhara Singh, R/O 243/1 Sugar Mill Colony, Yamunanagar. That I Have Change My Name From Manoj Kumar To Manoj Kumar Verma.

**I, Jatinder Singh** S/O Gurnam Singh R/O H.No- 171, Village-Mankyan, Po Ramgarh, Tehsil And Distt. Panchkula, Have Changed My Name From Jatinder Singh To Jetinder Singh.

**I, Reena Kumari** W/O Sh. Ashwani Kumar Sood R/O H.No.241 Sector-7 Panchkula Haryana Have Changed My Name From Reena Kumari To Reena Sood

**I, Jaideep Gulia** S/O Rajiv Kumar R/O Pana Choudhran, Near Choupal, Badli (72) Badli, Distt Jhajjar, Haryana Have Changed My Name From Jaideep To Jaideep Gulia For All Future Purposes.

**I, Naveen** S/O Sh. Ram Niwas R/O Vpo Tehsil And Distt. Bhiwani, Haryana, Have Changed Name Of My Minor Son Bhushan Aged 3 Years To Aditya N Rao.

**I, Rajesh** S/O Ram Kishan R/O Dhigana (47), Jind, Haryana-126114, Have Changed Name Of My Minor Son Tejas Aged 11 Years To Tejas Nimot.

**I, Sunil Kumar** S/O Ram Kishan R/O Dhigana (47), Jind, Haryana-126114, Have Changed Name Of My Minor Son Asmit Aged 11 Years To Asmit Nimot.

**I, Kanika Bansal** W/o Tarun Bansal R/O H.No.182, Sector 12, Huda, Panipat declared that after my marriage I have changed my name from Kanika Goyal to Kanika Bansal, for all future purposes.

I, Hitherto Known As Vashisht Kumar Son Of Babu Lal Goenka Residing At H.No.Hm-25, Housing Board Colony, Green Avenue, Amritsar-143001 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Vashisht Goenka.

I, Hitherto Known As Sukhmander Singh Sidhu Son Of Gurdit Singh Residing At Village Varnala, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur-142047 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Sukhmander Singh.

I, Hitherto Known As Shanti Sidhu Wife Of Sukhmander Singh Residing At Village Varnala, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur-142047 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Shanti.

I, Harpreet Kaur Dhunna Wife Of Pardeep Singh Residing Of Village Hardasa, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur-142050, Have Changed The Name Of My Minor Daughter Rajveer Kaur Dhunna Aged 10 Years And He Shall Hereafter Be Known As Rajveer Kaur.

I, Hitherto Known As Nareesh Wife Of Kanwaljit Sharma Residing At H.No.475, New Golden Avenue, Near Jaura Phatak, District Amritsar-143001 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Naresh Bala.

I, Hitherto Known As Khushwinder Singh Brar Son Of Parminder Singh Residing At Vpo Mahanbadhar Tehsil And District Sri Muktsar Sahib-152032 Punjab Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Khushwinder Singh.

I, Hitherto Known As Jarnail Singh Son Of Harbans Singh Residing Village Pindi Saidan Po Kalanaur, District Gurdaspur-143512 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Jarnail Singh Bajwa.

I, Hitherto Known As Ramandeep Kaur Wife Of Jarnail Singh Bajwa Residing Village Pindi Saidan Po Kalanaur, District Gurdaspur-143512 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Ramandeep Kaur Bajwa.

I, Hitherto Known As Raj Bahadar Singh Ghumman Son Of Jasbir Singh Residing At Near I.T.I Vpo Kalanaur District Gurdaspur-143512 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Raj Bahadar Singh.

**I, Varun Arora** S/O Ram Saran Arora R/O H.No.F9/2421, Gali No.1, Shastri Nagar, Gopal Nagar, Majitha Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Name Varun Is My Given Name And Arora Is My Surname

**I, Alka** W/O Sanjeev Kumar R/O Plot No.61, Gali No.3, Preet Avenue Village Bharariwal Gagan Kirana Store Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Alka To Alka Sharma

**I Daljit Singh** S/O Jasbir Singh R/O Vpo Rampur Bhtwind Tehsil Khadar Sahib Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name From Daljit Singh To Given Name Daljit Sumame Singh

**I, Baljinder Singh** S/O Amrik Singh R/O Village Malia District Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name Bajinder Is My Given Name And Singh Is My Surname

**I Daljeet Kaur** W/O S. Inderjit Singh Resident Of H.No-534, Kirpa Nagar Naringarh Chheharta Distt. Amritsar 143001 Have Changed My Name From Daljeet Kaur To Daljit Kaur. All Concerned Please Note.

**I Gurbhej Singh** S/O Sulakhn Singh R/O Vill Dheriwal Daroga Distt Gurdaspur 143518 Punjab, India Declare That Gurbhej Is My Given Name And Singh Is My Surname

**I, Kawaljit Kaur** W/O Gurwinder Singh R/O 134, Ghanupur Kale Road, Max City Colony Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Kawaljit Kaur To Kanwaljit Kaur

In My Father Jc-542417k Sub Narendra Singh 21 Kumaon Services Documents My Name Wrongly Written As Abhisesh Singh Janoti, Which Needs To Be Corrected As Abisesh Singh Janoti. Abishek Singh Janoti Resident Of Kande Thapliya, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand

In My Services Documents My Son's Name Wrongly Written As Ajay Singh Janoti, Which Needs To Be Corrected As Ajay Singh, I. No. Jc-542417k Sub Narendra Singh, 21 Kumaon

In My Son 4195905y Hav Kailash Singh 21 Kumaon Services Documents My Name Wrongly Written As Mohini Devi, Which Needs To Be Corrected As Mohani Devi. Mohani Devi Resident Of Dofar, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand

In My Son 4195905y Hav Kailash Singh 21 Kumaon Services Documents My Name Wrongly Written As Darwan Singh, Which Needs To Be Corrected As Darwan Singh Kalakoti. Darwan Singh Kalakoti Resident Of Dofar, Bageshwar, Uttarakhand

**I, Gurbakhsh Singh** S/O Muktar Singh R/O Village Burj 195, Po Chabhal Tehsil And District Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name From Gurbakhsh Singh To Gurbakhsh Singh

**I, Jatni Sharma** S/O Sanjeev Kumar R/O H.No.31, Akash Avenue Near Panther Public School Amritsar Have Changed My Name Jatni Is My Given Name And Sharma Is My Surname

**I, Raman S/O** Babbu R/O Ward No.2, Gandhi Nagar, Vpo Raja Sansi, Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Raman To Raman Gill

**I, Kamaldeep Kaur** Dhillion W/O Jaspal Singh R/O 387, D Block Ranjait Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Kamaldeep.

I, hitherto Known as Babli @ Ramrati W/o Baljeet R/o H.No. 1370/20 Ekta Colony, Near Bittu Kiryana Store, Rohtak -124001, Haryana declare that Babli @ Ramrati W/o Baljeet both name are same and one person. Now I have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Babli.

**I Som Dutt Atri** S/o Sh.Ram Bilas R/o H. No. 601, Sector 06, Hooda, Panipat, i have changed my name from Som Dutt Atri to Som Dutt Attri for all future purposes.

**I, Ashok Kumar** Jain S/o Sh. Moti Sagar Jain R/o H. No. 1195, Sector 14, Hisar (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Ashok Kumar Jain to Ashok Jain for future purpose.

**I, Rita Rani** W/o Sh. Vikas Jindal R/O H. No. 3142, Near Boosting Station, Sector 14, Part-2, Hisar (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Rita Rani to Reeta Jindal for future purpose.

**I, Simi Rejith** Wife of No. 15511773P Rank SWR Name Rejith Raj R/O Vill. Seethathode, PO Gurunathanmannu, Teh. Konni, Distt. Pathanamthitta, Kerala-689667 have changed my name in my husband army record from Simi Rejith to Simi Chachikutty vide affidavit dated 30-01-2024 before Session Court Hisar.

**I, Pawan Kumar** S/o Krishan Kumar R/O VPO Chikanwas, Tehsil and Distt. Hisar declare that in my school documents and all Identity Proof my name is mentioned as Pawan Krishan. I have changed my name from Pawan Krishan to Pawan Kumar. In future, I will be known as Pawan Kumar.

**I, Savitri Devi** W/o Jagdish Chander R/o Amar Colony, Sirsama Tehsil, Thanesar, District Kurukshetra, declare that I am known by two names: Savitri Devi and Amarjeet Kaur. Now Call me as Savitri Devi.

**I, Shammii Lata** W/o GS 160940K Sup BR-11 Swinder Pal of Unit 69 RCC (GRFF) C/o 56APO, Resident of Village New Gugran, Po.Sujanpur, Tehsil And District Pathankot (Punjab)-145023, Declare That My Husband Service Record My Date of Birth Wrongly Entered As 19/02/1971, Instead of 12/12/1971, Kindly So Correct It.

**I Sarabjeet Kaur** W/O Janral Singh R/O Plot No. 2, Nanakpura, Bhunna Distt. Kaithal I Have Changed My Name Sarabjeet Sumame Kaur.

**I, Malkit Singh** S/o Gurdial Singh R/o Vill Narike Tehsil and Distt. Malerkotla, have changed my name to Malket Singh.

**I, Surjit Kaur** Alias Parwinder Kaur W/o Karam Singh, Ibrahimpur, Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar, have changed name to Parwinder Kaur

**I, Rajinder Kaur** Bamrah W/o Jaswinder Singh, 8002/09456, Gali No. 3, Mehak Nagar, Kharar, Mohali, have changed name to Rajinder Kaur

**I, Jagroop Arora** S/O Gulshan Kumar R/O #2051, Old Post Office, Gali Tarkhana W/O, Jandiiala Guru Tehsil And Distt Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Jagroop Singh To Jagroop Arora.

**I Phool Chander** S/o Sohan Lal, Resident of House No. 1201, Sector 8-C, Chandigarh have changed my name from Phool Chander to Phool Chand.

**I, Revti Prasad Gautam** S/o Chander Shekhar Prasad Gautam R/O Devi Colony, Parsu Ram Mandir, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar declares that in my SBI Bank Account my name & my father's name were wrongly entered as Rewati Mishra S/o Chander Shekhar Prasad Mishra. But our actual names are Revti Prasad Gautam S/o Chander Shekhar Prasad Gautam (As per Aadhar Card No. 939286696416). Please correct it.

**I, Deepika** W/o Sh. Aditya Goyal, R/O Suncity Heights Ladhot Road, Sector-36A Rohtak Haryana declare That I have changed my name from Deepika to Deepika Goyal. In future I will be called by the name of Deepika Goyal for all purposes.

**I, Dinesh Kumar** Ex. Sainik No. 1486644L Rank SPR s/o Nathu Ram r/o Village Boswal, Post Office Ayalki, Tehsil & District Fatehabd in my Army discharge book my son name mentioned as Uday Singh & in his documents name mentioned as Uday Singh. But in record office Bengal Engineers Group and Centre Roorke his name mentioned as Udhai Singh. Now I want to make it correct in record office Bengal Engineers Group and Centre Roorke as Uday Singh.

**I, Subhash Chandra** S/o sh.Kanha Ram r/o vill. Chapla Mori, Tehsil & District Fatehabad declares that names of mine & my wife has been wrongly written in my minor daughter Aarzoos's 10th class educational documents is Subhash & Anju. But mine & my wife's correct names are Subhash Chand & Anju Bala.

**I, Inderpal Singh** S/o Teg Singh R/O Damkora Road, Officer Colony Tohana, Tehsil Tohana, Distt. Fatehabad have changed my name from Inderpal Singh to Inderpal Singh Toor for all future purposes. All concerned please note.

**I, No. JC-341212Y** Rank Nb Sub Kulbir S/o Sh. Partap Singh R/O Village Kishangarh, Post & Teh. Meham, Distt. Rohtak (Haryana) declare that my son name Keshav Singh Ahlawat is wrongly mentioned in my Army Service record. But my son correct & actual name is Keshav Singh. vide affidavit dated 30.01.2024 before Notary Public Rohtak.

**I.No.4462626M** Rank: Ex- Hav. Name: Darshan Singh R/O Village & P.O. Dhingi,, Tehsil Nabha, Distt. Patiala, Punjab-147201 declare that in my service record my daughter's name is wrongly mentioned as Sunita Rani but her correct name is Ramandeep Kaur.

**I, Army No. 15323699F** Rank: HAV Name: Bekkemm Rangappa, presently residing at 7-16-20-86E Sriram Nagara Veedi, Ward No. 7 Vill Giddalur, Post Giddalur, Distt. Prakasham (State) Andhra Pradesh Pin code-523357, Unit: 1 AER C/o 56 APO, have changed my daughter's name from Bekkemm Sreelakshmi to Bekkemm Sree Lakshmi Kaliche.

**I Pardeep Kumar** Gupta S/o Janeshwar Dass Gupta R/o H. No B-17, NDRI Campus Karnal Declared That Pardeep Kumar Gupta and Prdeep Kumar Gupta Are the Name of One and Same Person. I Known With Both Names, in Future I Shall Be Known as Pardeep Kumar Gupta.

**I, Jashandeep Kaur** W/o Amandeep Singh R/O Village Dullar, Samana Distt. Patiala (Punjab) declare that in my son's Passport his name wrongly mentioned Komalpreet Singh but his correct name is Kamalpreet Singh also my name wrongly mentioned Jashan Kaur but my correct name is Jashandeep Kaur.

**I, Satvinder** W/O Gurvinder Singh R/O H No 968 Jattan Wala Mohalla Mata Raj Kaur Gurudwara Manimajra Chandigarh. Have Changed My Name From Satvinder To Salvinder Kaur.

**I Parmajit Singh** S/O Dalbir Singh R/O Pattii Sahjre Ke Vpo Chohla Sahib Tehsil And Distt Tarn Taran Punjab I Have Changed My Name From Parmajit Singh To Parmjit Singh.

**I, Shilpa Handa** W/o Ankush Kumar Pabbi R/O VPO. Baghana, Tehsil Phagwara, Distt. Kapurthala, Punjab-144405 Have Changed My Name From Shilpa Handa To Shilpa Pabbi.

**I, Sarvjit Kaur** W/o Tarsem Singh Ruprai R/O Village Ghazipur, Po. Chamiara, Distt. Jalandhar Have Changed My Name From Sarvjit Kaur To Sarbjit Kaur.

**I, Parmajeet Kaur** W/o Tajinder Singh R/O Village Bassi, Po. Jaid, Distt. Kapurthala Have Changed My Name From Parmajeet Kaur To Kaur Parmajeet.

**I, Manjit Singh** S/o Gurcharan Singh Village sorta distt ambala have Changed My Name Manjeet Singh.

**I, Vijender Singh** S/o Harinder Singh Vill. Naisi, Kurukshetra have Changed My Minor Son Name Pushpinder Singh Pal to Pushpinder Singh.

**I, Dharamvir** Son of Mohan Lal resident of Vill Shahnabur Distt Ambala have changed my name To Dharamvir Singh

**I, Harmeet W/O** Jasvinder Singh Vill.Kachhwa Rai Farm, Karnal



# BJP Candidate declared Chandigarh Mayor amid controversy as AAP-Cong cry foul

## MCC House witnesses unprecedented scenes; Media not allowed inside

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Amid intense drama, the BJP candidate for Chandigarh Mayor election was declared victorious by the presiding officer on Tuesday as eight votes of the AAP-Congress block were declared invalid, prompting the INDIA alliance partners to term it as "murder of democracy".

BJP retained the three top posts as Councillors from the two INDIA bloc parties created a ruckus in the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation House as the result for the mayor's post was declared, and boycotted the next phase – elections to the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor.

BJP candidate Manoj Sonkar defeated the AAP's Kuldeep Kumar for the mayor's post, polling 16 votes against the 12 won by his rival. Eight votes were declared invalid. BJP nominees Kuljit Sandhu and Rajinder Sharma were declared elected to the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor, respectively.



Chandigarh's newly elected Mayor Manoj Sonkar with other BJP councillors and supporters after being declared victorious in a controversial election. **Pioneer Photo**

Immediately after Presiding Officer Anil Masih declared the result, Sonkar sat on the Mayor's Chair as the Councillors from the two INDIA bloc parties created a ruckus in the Chandigarh MCC House and tried to stop him. Marshals were pressed in to control the situation. Protesting against the poll results, the

Opposition- Congress and AAP councillors boycotted the next phase – elections to the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor. Later, elections on these two posts were held and BJP also retained the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor. BJP nominees Kuljit Sandhu and Rajinder Sharma were declared elected to the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor,

### AAP moves HC; Seeks fresh polls under supervision of retired judge

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Soon after the INDIA bloc nominee got defeated, the Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court, seeking setting aside the mayoral poll results and demanding fresh elections under the supervision of a retired HC judge.

The petition was filed by AAP councillor Kuldeep Kumar, who was the candidate for the mayor post. The petitioner sought setting aside the process of the election of mayor of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, alleging "complete fraud and forgery".

Kumar also sought an investigation by an independent agency, such as a special investigation team headed by UT Senior Superintendent of Police, into the "entire fraud committed during the election process". Directions were also sought for the UT Chandigarh and other respondents to "seal, preserve and present before the High Court the entire process of the election held on January 30, including the record of ballot papers, proceedings of the election process, and videography done under the court".

Further, Kumar prayed for a direction to restrain respondent Manoj Kumar Sonkar from discharging the mayor's functions. The petition filed through counsel RPS Bara, KS Kharbanda, and Ferry Sofat will come up for hearing on Wednesday. Senior advocate Gurminder Singh is expected to argue on the petitioner's behalf.

### Punjab CM Alleges Election Fraud in Mayoral polls

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The aftermath of the mayoral elections in Chandigarh has ignited a political firestorm, with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday accusing the BJP of orchestrating electoral fraud to secure victory.

Mann, addressing the media hours after BJP candidate emerged victorious in mayoral polls, lambasted the saffron party for what he termed as the "plundering" of the mayoral elections, stating that the events of January 30 would forever stain the fabric of India's democracy.

"January 30 will be remembered as the 'darkest day' in the annals of Indian polity as BJP led Union Government has murdered democracy during the election for post of Mayor in Chandigarh," he said, alleging that the BJP had compromised the integrity of the constitution during the polls.

Expressing dismay, Mann pointed out the irony of the situation, as the nation had recently celebrated Republic Day, only for democratic principles to be disregarded in the electoral process. He asserted that the mayoral elections in Chandigarh were marred by foul play, indicating a systematic erosion of democratic values.

The Chief Minister specifically targeted the presiding officer, Anil Masih, accusing him of colluding with the BJP to manipulate the election outcome. He demanded that Masih be charged with sedition for betraying the nation's constitutional ethos.

Substantiating his allegations with video clips, Mann highlighted instances of irregularities, including the late arrival of the presiding officer



and his alleged tampering with ballot papers during the counting process.

Stating that BJP had deliberately appointed the head of its minority wing as the presiding officer in these polls, Mann said that the "spineless presiding officer acted as per the whims and fancies of his masters to ensure victory of the BJP nominee...He must be booked under sedition for deceiving the constitution of the country. He had deliberately counted the votes in the absence of polling agents just to ensure the win of the BJP candidate".

Mann reiterated his concerns about the broader implications of election fraud, warning that such malpractices could undermine the integrity of future parliamentary elections. He emphasized the need for transparency and accountability in the electoral process to uphold the sanctity of democracy.

Furthermore, Mann issued a stark warning, stating, "It will be the last day of democracy incase BJP wins the forthcoming general elections."

Mann, addressing the purported manipulation of votes in the Chandigarh mayoral election conducted earlier in the day, remarked that if the BJP, by his reference, is willing to resort to such unethical

### Poll process unconstitutional and illegal, says AAP

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

AAP leader Raghav Chadha on Tuesday questioned the Chandigarh mayoral poll process and alleged that it was not only "unconstitutional and illegal" but also an act of "deshdroh" (treason) as he accused the BJP of "orchestrating" it after sensing its defeat in the election.

Accompanied by senior Congress leader Pawan Kumar Bansal, the AAP MP said the AAP-Congress alliance was destined to win the Chandigarh mayoral polls as they had 20 votes in the 35-member Chandigarh Municipal Corporation House.

"Victory of our alliance was certain, but sensing imminent defeat, the BJP hatched conspiracies. First, the presiding officer, who was to conduct polls on January 18, was made to fall ill. Thereafter an attempt was made to buy councillors of the AAP. When BJP's 'operation lotus' failed, then they did fraud (in the mayoral polls)," he alleged.

The poll results came as a setback for the AAP and the Congress which were contesting the mayoral polls in an alliance. Chadha said elections were held with Anil Masih, who was an office-bearer of the BJP's minority wing, being announced as the presiding officer. "BJP's presiding officer did not allow any election agent of any party to come forward during counting of votes. Whenever counting takes place, election agents of parties are allowed to come," he said.

The AAP leader further alleged that the presiding officer himself used his pen on certain ballot papers and declared them invalid during counting. "It was for the first time that out of 36 votes (including vote of Chandigarh MP), eight votes were declared invalid," he said while demanding an FIR against the presiding officer. Congress leader and former Union minister Bansal said that such "jungle raj" was never seen and blamed the BJP for the same. Bansal alleged that the eight ballot papers were rejected in a premeditated manner. The Congress and AAP agents were not given access to the ballot paper. "The presiding officer, who I would say is a shallow person, had been given one clear specification that he has to come out only after declaring the BJP



candidate as the winner," he added.

Bansal further said, "We were watching the live (feed). If you notice, the presiding officer immediately vacated the chair and the BJP's candidate was standing beside immediately sat on the chair. The BJP members rushed in, took and tore the ballot papers before anyone could even go there and see."

Replying to a question, Chadha said, "This is not a setback for one coalition or one party. It is a setback for India's democracy and as a democrat, we are aggrieved, we are flabbergasted."

"We are worried as to what will happen in upcoming 2024 polls if the BJP can stoop to such a low level and commit forgery and illegality. The BJP can go to any level to rig the election process and indulge in every possible electoral fraud and electoral malpractices," he said.

respectively.

Having witnessed a lot of twists and turns, the polling process was finally held in the presence of Chandigarh Deputy Commissioner Vinay Pratap Singh. The administration had deployed additional police forces around the MCC campus. Voting, which was scheduled to start at 10 am, began after almost an hour's delay as the deputy commissioner and some BJP councillors arrived late. Chandigarh MP Kirron Kher, who is the ex-officio member of the House, cast her vote first. A total of 36 votes were polled during the hour-long process. BJP had only 15 members in the house, while, AAP-Congress combine comprised 20 members apart from a lone Shiromani Akali Dal councillor.

Opposition councillors alleged there was tampering with the ballot papers at the elections, a charge rubbished by the BJP. AAP approached the Punjab and Haryana High Court later in the day even as Tuesday's elections too were held on the directions of the high court after a postponement on January 18.

The AAP and the Congress accused presiding officer Anil Masih of making some marks on the ballots during the counting, rendering them invalid. They argued that the "invalid" ballots tilted the balance in the BJP candidate's favour. "The worst fears of unabashed tampering by the BJP's councillor-presiding officer in a premeditated and planned intrigue to murder democracy have come true in the Chandigarh mayoral elections," former Union Minister and senior Congress leader Pawan Kumar Bansal alleged.

Bansal claimed that the Congress-AAP agent was not allowed to examine the ballot papers. "The presiding officer announced a rejection of eight votes, declared the BJP candidate the winner and went away. BJP members rushed to the table and tore off the ballot papers," he alleged.

Congress councillor Gurbax Rawat alleged that the presiding officer did not call the party's election agent when the ballot box was opened for counting. "We do not accept the result," she said. "A fraud was played on us. No free and fair election took place," another councillor said. Chandigarh Congress President HS Lucky said the BJP intentionally got a presiding officer who holds allegiance to them and he rigged it." While signing, he marked on eight votes to declare them invalid. This is injustice and the death of democracy.

BJP councillor Saurabh Joshi rubbished the opposition allegations and said if the councillors have any objections, they can challenge the result.

The newly elected mayor was to hold the elections to the two most senior posts after him. With the opposition parties boycotting this phase of mayoral polls, these posts also went to the BJP.

The BJP has 14 councillors in the 35-member corporation. Its Chandigarh MP Kirron

Kher also has voting rights as an ex-officio member. AAP has 13 councillors and the Congress seven. Shiromani Akali Dal has one councillor.

As part of the alliance in Chandigarh, the AAP contested for the mayor's post while the Congress fielded candidates for the two other posts.

AAP leader Kejriwal tweeted on X, "If these people can stoop to this level in a mayoral poll, they could go to any extent in the national elections. This is very worrying."

Tight security arrangements were in place around the municipal corporation building for the polls. About 700 police personnel, along with those

from the paramilitary forces, were deployed.

The polls were originally scheduled for January 18 but deferred to February 6 by the Chandigarh administration after the presiding officer fell ill. The administration had at that time also said the polls were postponed after assessing the law and order situation. The administration's order deferring the polls had triggered protests by the Congress and the AAP councillors.

On January 24, the high court directed the Chandigarh administration to hold the mayoral polls at 10 am on January 30. While quashing the order postponing the elections, the court called it "unreasonable, unjustified and arbitrary".

Elections to these three posts are held every year during the House's five-year term. The Congress had abstained from voting in 2022 and 2023, leading to a BJP victory. The election for the mayor's post is through a secret ballot.

In this year's elections, the post was reserved for a candidate from the Scheduled Caste category.

Media persons were denied entry to the press gallery to cover the election. Reporters could, however, watch the polling process on a screen installed in the conference room which had no audio output.

## Budget Session of Haryana Assembly from Feb 20

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The budget session of Haryana Assembly will commence on February 20. School Education Minister Kanwar Pal, who also holds the portfolio of Parliamentary Affairs Minister said, during a press conference shortly after the meeting of State Cabinet.

He informed that at the start of the cabinet meeting, a two-minute silence was observed in honour of the martyrs of India's freedom struggle.

The Minister said that as per the state government's decision, the Cabinet initiated by honoring the martyrs and sanctioned employment for 18 of their dependents who, due to various reasons, missed the application deadline for jobs. He also informed that farmers will no longer be required to pay a royalty of Rs 200 for soil extracted from their farms for personal use. Instead, they can conveniently submit the necessary information on the Meri Fasal Mera Byora portal, eliminating the need to visit government offices.

He said that State Cabinet also gave approval of Rs 1,500 crore loan to Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation. The corporation's outstanding loan, previously around Rs 14,000 crores, has been substantially reduced to Rs 4,000 crores and is expected to be completely cleared in the near future, he added.

**HRY CABINET RAISES OLD AGE PENSION TO RS 3000 PER MONTH FROM JAN 1**

Haryana Cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday approved



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Cabinet Ministers and Officers observing two minute silence in the memory of the martyrs of India's freedom struggle, during the cabinet meeting at Chandigarh on Tuesday. **Pioneer Photo**

a monthly enhancement of Rs 250 for 14 pension schemes being implemented by the Social Justice, Empowerment, Welfare of SCs & BCs, and Ayodhaya (SEWA) Department, Haryana, effective from January 1, 2024 to be paid from February 2024. This decision will benefit approximately 31.40 lakh beneficiaries under various social security schemes.

Gujjar further said that the cabinet has also approved an increase in the rates of nine social security pension schemes operated under the SEWA Department from Rs 2,750 to Rs 3,000 per month, effective January 1, 2024. These schemes include the Old Age Samman Allowance Scheme, Haryana Pension to Widows and Destitute Women Scheme, Haryana Disabled Persons Pension Scheme, Ladli Social Allowance Scheme, Haryana Allowance to Dwarf Scheme Pension, Haryana Allowance to Eunuchs Scheme, Financial Assistance to Widowers and Unmarried Persons, Financial Assistance for Stage 3 and Stage 4 Cancer Patients, and Financial Assistance to Persons Suffering from Rare Diseases.

In addition, financial assistance under the Non-School Going Disabled Children Scheme has been increased from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 2,400, Financial Assistance to Destitute Children Scheme from Rs. 1,850 to Rs. 2,100, Financial assistance under Kashmiri Migrants scheme has been increased to Rs.1250 to Rs. 1500. Apart from this, financial aid for acid attack victims (Women & Girls) has been revised.

He further said that patients in Haryana suffering from Thalassaemia and Haemophilia, with a family income of up to Rs 3 lakh per annum, will now be entitled to a monthly disability pension of Rs 3000. This decision, expected to benefit approximately 2083 patients, will result in an annual disbursement of Rs 7.49 crore at the present rate of Rs. 3000 per month.

**Sanctions Haryana Registration and Regulation of Travel Agents Bill, 2024 to Curb Illegal Immigration**

The Cabinet has also approved "The Haryana Registration and Regulation

of Travel Agents Bill, 2024 in the interests of innocent and unemployed youths from falling prey to illegal immigration rackets. In view of the disturbing trend of individuals, particularly from the States of Punjab and Haryana, being deceived by corrupt travel agents engaged in fraudulent activities related to immigration, this bold initiative has been taken. Key highlights of this bill includes that no person can undertake the profession of a travel agent without obtaining a registration certificate under the Act, an application must be submitted to the competent authority with the required documents, fees, and within the specified time, the competent authority may issue a registration certificate after verifying the application details.

**Approves 'The Haryana Honourable Disposal of Dead Body Bill, 2024'**

In a significant move to uphold the right and dignity of the dead body, the Cabinet has also granted approval to "The Haryana Honourable Disposal of Dead Body Bill, 2024." This landmark legislation aims to ensure the decent and timely

last rites of a dead body. In consideration of the respect and dignity owed to a dead person, nobody should be allowed to raise any demand or bait for pursuing any demands by way of any protest or agitation by not performing the timely last rites of a dead body. It is essential to prevent any individual from using a deceased body as a means of protest or demonstration in any form.

**Sanctions Rs 1500 Crore for Infrastructure Development**

The Cabinet has also approved Sanction/Enhancement of Working Limits of Rs.1500 crore of Haryana State Industrial & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (HSIIDC) for Infrastructure Development mainly at Global City at Gurugram and IMT, Sohna besides land development at other locations of Industrial Estates of HSIIDC in the State of Haryana. The cabinet has also approved the draft of the Hissar Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) Bill 2024. The State Government has decided to establish the Hissar Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), Hissar to ensure sustained and balanced growth of the Hissar Metropolitan area.

**18 dependents of martyrs of Haryana to get jobs**

The Cabinet also accorded approval to provide jobs to 18 dependents of martyrs while giving relaxation in the policy for appointment to the dependents of martyrs on compassionate grounds. Out of 18 cases, 8 cases were related to paramilitary forces, and 10 cases were related to armed forces.

### Chandigarh University founder nominated by Prez to Rajya Sabha

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

President Droupadi Murmu has chosen Satnam Singh Sandhu — as the latest addition to the illustrious corridors of the Rajya Sabha, after his extraordinary journey from the farm fields to the upper echelons of India's education system.

Born into a farmer's family, Sandhu navigated the challenges of rural life, where access to education was often a distant dream. Raised in Rasulpur village of Ferozepur, he reportedly attended dilapidated government schools where classes were often held under trees. Despite the odds, Sandhu's thirst for knowledge was unquenchable, nurtured by his farmer father and grandfather who instilled in him a love for reading newspapers from end to end. Undeterred by adversity, he embarked on a mission to transform the educational landscape. His journey into the realm of education commenced in 2001 when he, along with his friend and co-founder Rashpal Singh Dhaliwal, established the Chandigarh Group of Colleges (CGC) at Landran in Mohali. Fast forward to 2012, and Sandhu's brainchild, Chandigarh University (CU), emerged on the scene, marking a meteoric rise in the education sector. Despite initial challenges and a loan of Rs 95 lakh, Sandhu's vision began to materialize, with CU breaking into the prestigious QS World University Rankings in 2023. Sandhu's vision extended beyond the confines of traditional academia. Through his two NGOs — the Indian Minorities Foundation and the New India Development Foundation, he spearheaded initiatives aimed at promoting health, communal harmony, and societal welfare.

BRIEFS

**OVER 25 LAKH PROPERTY CARDS DISTRIBUTED IN 6250 VILLAGES OF STATE, SAYS CHIEF SECRETARY**

**Chandigarh:** Haryana Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal on Tuesday directed all Deputy Commissioners in the state to establish weekly targets for completing drone mapping, ownership card uploading, and distribution in their respective districts. They are also instructed to monitor progress regularly to ensure completion by April 30. The Chief Secretary was presiding over the review meeting of the Large-Scale Mapping Project and its implementation here in Chandigarh. The Chief Secretary said that the mapping work has been completed in most of the districts. In the remaining districts, the required work should be completed by the stipulated date. He interacted directly with all the District Deputy Commissioners, took information about the problems being faced in this work and gave necessary guidelines to complete them.

**CTU TO PLY A BUS SERVICE TO AYODHYA**

**Chandigarh:** UT Chandigarh administration has decided to ply a bus service to Ayodhya. It will take 19 hours to reach Ayodhya from Chandigarh. Presently, CTU has been providing its bus services for various destinations in the neighbouring states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, a statement said. The bus services have been plying to various religious destinations like Salasar, Khatu Shyam, Vrindavan, Haridwar, Katra, Jwala Ji & Chamunda Devi etc. Now, after the inauguration of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya, a bus service is being started considering the religious sentiments of devotees of Lord Rama. The bus service from ISBT-17, Chandigarh to Ayodhya will start before Basant Panchmi.

**PUROHIT PAYS HOMAGE TO MAHATMA GANDHI ON HIS DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

**Chandigarh:** Punjab Governor and Administrator, UT, Chandigarh Banwari Lal Purohit on Tuesday paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of his death anniversary, observed as Martyrs' Day across the Nation. The Governor along with his Additional Chief Secretary K Siva Prasad and other officers and staff members of Punjab Raj Bhavan observed two-minute silence as a mark of respect to Gandhi ji and in the memory of all those who fought for the country's freedom and sacrificed their lives. The Administrator said that Mahatma Gandhi was the epitome of truth and non-violence; he led several landmark movements during the freedom struggle, to free the nation from the British yoke.





PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sudesh W/o Puran R/o H. No. 39, Mahavir Colony, Hisar declare that my previous sale deed no. 9995 dated 15-03-2010 which missing on 12-12-23. Whose DDR no. Registered at 132290512400450. If any person finds it then he can contact Sh. Aditya Pratap Singh Advocate Ch. No. 258 Distt Court Bhiwani, Mo.No. 9991822800.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Baljinder Kaur W/o Harpreet Singh S/o Kabal Singh R/o V.P.O. Ghoman, Tehsil Batala, District Gurdaspur state that I have purchased a plot situated at Mehta Road, Ghoman from Sukhdev Singh resident of Dakoha. The registry and sale deed of the said plot is already in the name of old owner. The original registry (sale deed) in the name of Sukhdev Singh S/o Bachan Singh resident of Dakoha Wasika No. 1163 dated 27/05/1994 bearing Khasra No. 52/15/2/21 (0-4), 16/1/1 (0-6) Total land 2, Total land 0.10 Marlas situated at Tehsil Batala, Distt. Gurdaspur sent for photocopies. The original registries (Sale Deed) fell down somewhere at Batala. I tried hard to find it, but I couldn't find it. Missing report has been filed in Sanjha Kendra Community Policing Wing Punjab bearing number LRN-426578/2024 dated 20/01/2024. The said registry/ Sale Deed Wasika No. 1163 dated 27/05/1994 is not deposited in any bank, police station or any court.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Jaswant Singh S/o Anoop Singh S/o Mohinder Singh R/o Tower Wall Gali, Near Govt. high School, Amritsar Road, Landekhe, Tehsil and Distt. Mogha have purchased property measuring 08 Marlas 02 1/2 Sarsahi being 149/1656 share of 04 Kanaal 12 marlas bearing khasra no. 8/11/9/24-12, Kheawat no. 783, Khatouni no. 944 as per the Jamabandi for the year 2018-19 situated in the revenue area of V. Landekhe, Tehsil and Distt. Mogha and bounded as under: North: 62° 4', South: 62° 4' Baljit Kaur, East - 36° Rasta/ Street, West: 36; Balbir Singh vide registered sale deed bearing vasika no. 2023-24/21/13385 Dated 27/09/2023 from Premjit Kaur W/o Darshan Singh S/o Mohinder Singh R/o Mogha, Tehsil and Distt. Mogha. At the time of execution of above said sale deed, I have taken previous Original sale deed bearing vasika no. 2023-24/21/13385 executed by Sukhjit Singh S/o Tarlok Singh S/o Tehal Singh R/o V. Lakian, Distt. Ferozepur in favor of Premjit Kaur W/o Darshan Singh S/o Mohinder Singh R/o V. Buttar Kalan, Tehsil and Distt. Mogha and sale deed no. 2047 Dated 06/08/2012 measuring 05 Marlas 05 Sarsahi executed by Jaswant Singh S/o Nishan Singh in favor of Premjit Kaur. Original sale deed no. 3647 Dated 20/07/2012 has been lost from us, against which I have lodged DDR no. 012 Dated 18/11/2023. Now, I am going to take housing loan from State Bank of India, Municipal Corporation Branch, Distt. Mogha against my this property, if anyone has any objection, then, he/she can raise in writing the same within 14 days to Amrit Goyal Advocate, Chamber no. 95, Distt. Courts Mogha (98888-00212) or the above named bank. After that no. objection would be considered / accepted.

Branch Manager,  
State Bank of India

PUBLIC NOTICE

I hereby inform the general public that Sh. Ptambher Sharma S/o. Gaurah Sharma is owner of plot measuring 49 square yards situated in New Azad Nagar, Ludhiana and comprised of Khata no. 420485 to 497, 425802 to 505 Khasra no. 927-928-929-9282-9282 entered in the Jamabandi for the years 2009-10 of Village Lohara Tehsil and District Ludhiana. Now Sh. Shivam Pandey S/o Sh. Bindeshwar Pandey is taking loan against the property on the said property from PNB Housing Finance Limited having branch office at BXIX, 282/1, ISI Floor Dr. Sham Singh Road Ferozpur Road, Feroz Chak, Pamber Ludhiana, Sh. Ptambher Sharma S/o Sh. Gaurah Sharma lost the following original document in respect of said property. Sale deed dated 26.10.2005 bearing vasika no. 10502 in favour of Sh. Lakshwinder Kumar S/o Sh. Mohan Lal. If anybody found the said lost document, then may contact to undersigned and anybody having claim or claiming any prior rights or interest in any manner in this property or has raised loan by depositing the aforesaid documents to any person / bank/ corporation/ financial institution may approach the undersigned and may submit objections within 7 days from the date of this public notice. After the expiry of the period of this notice no claim shall be entertained and such claim shall be deemed to be false, fake, frivolous, fraudulent and baseless claim and shall have no value in the eyes of law.

ALOK MOHINDRA & ASSOCIATES  
Chamber No. 230, Lawyers Chambers Complex,  
District Courts, Ludhiana.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that Sh. Rahul Arora S/o Sh. Rajinder Kumar the owner of the property constituted on plot no. 1172 measuring 49 square yards situated in Jhally Colony, Village Tarai Pirubanda Tehsil and District Ludhiana and comprised of Khata no. 2047/2428 to 2428 Khasra no. 5311/2715683 entered in the Jamabandi for the years 2008-2007 of Village Tarai Pirubanda, Headbast no. 167 Tehsil and District Ludhiana. The sale deed dated 28.10.2009 bearing vasika no. 1424 in favour of Sh. Umesh Kumar S/o Sh. Parmeshwar Mehta in original has been misplaced and is not traceable by Sh. Rahul Arora S/o Sh. Rajinder Kumar. The said property is unencumbered and no mortgage has been created over the said property in favour of any Bank or Institution. Sh. Rahul Arora S/o Sh. Rajinder Kumar the owner who will mortgage the said property in favour of any Bank or Institution, Feroz Chak Main Market Ludhiana. If anybody finds out the sale deed or has any objection to the mortgage then he should have to send the same to the undersigned within 7 days of this publication otherwise it will be deemed that there is no objection to anybody.

Alok Mohindra Advocate, Chamber No. 220,  
District Court, Ludhiana Mobile:- 9814314452  
Indusind Bank Limited, Branch Ludhiana

COURT NOTICE

(U/o 5 Rule 20 CPC)  
IN THE COURT OF Ritu Y.K. Behl  
Principal Judge, Family Court, Karnal  
MANMOHAN SINGH  
VS.  
RITA CHOUDHARY  
CASE NO. HMA/1367/2022  
CNR NO. HRRK01-017316-2022  
NEXT DATE: 04-03-2024  
PUBLICATION ISSUED TO:  
Rita Choudhary Wife of Sh. Manmohan Singh and D/o Sh. Satpal Singh House No. 172, Ward No. 8, Parsu Ram Nagar, Ambala City, Distt. Ambala, Haryana.  
In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) Rita Choudhary wife of Sh. Manmohan Singh and D/o Sh. Satpal Singh resident of House No. 172, Ward No. 8, Parsu Ram Nagar, Ambala City, Distt. Ambala, Haryana could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 04-03-2024 at 10:00 a.m. For details log on to: [https://highcourtchd.gov.in/trs=district\\_notice&district=Karnal](https://highcourtchd.gov.in/trs=district_notice&district=Karnal)

Ritu Y.K. Behl  
Principal Judge, Family Court  
Karnal  
Dated, this day of 25-01-2024

PUBLICATION

That My Client Smt. Shivani W/o Sh. Sanjay Madan declared that I am Owner of Property Shop No. 91 - R Situated in Scheme no. 37, Improvement Trust Karnal, Netaji Subhash Marg Karnal, Tehsil and District Karnal. Measuring 27' X 9'-1" // 27.24 Sq. yards Belonging Owner Vide Vasika no. no. no. 1512/1 dated 08-05-2006, Now raising loan from KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LIMITED against it, Original Sale deed no. 4560/1 dated 21-10-2003 as executed by Sh. Anand Kumar S/o late Sh. Sant Ram and Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Anand Kumar in respect of the property in question measuring 27.24 Sq. yards in favour of Sh. Balkar Singh S/o Sh. Ram Singh and Smt. Sudesh Devi W/o Sh. Balkar Singh Original, Sale deed no. 9780/1 dated 15-03-2002 as executed by Sh. Ramesh Kalra S/o Sh. Radhe Sham Kalra in respect of the property in question measuring 27.24 Sq. yards in favour of Sh. Anand Kumar S/o late Sh. Sant Ram and Sh. Lokesh Kumar S/o Sh. Anand Kumar Original, Sale deed no. 737/1 dated 03-05-2000 as executed by Sh. Naryan Dass S/o Sh. Veer Bhan in respect of the property in question measuring 27.24 Sq. yards in favour of Sh. Ramesh Kalra S/o Sh. Radhe Sham Kalra Original, Sale deed no. 288/1 dated 16-04-1992 as executed by Improvement Trust Karnal in respect of the property in question in favour of Sh. Naryan Dass S/o Sh. Veer Bhan Original and Allotment letter no. 8720 dated 16-8-84 as issued by Improvement Trust Karnal in respect of the property in question in favour of Sh. Naryan Dass S/o Sh. Veer Bhan in Original is missing if any individual / Institution is having any information / charge / lien then contact undersigned within 7 days. Hemant Sharma Advocate (for KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LIMITED) #1581, Sector - 7, U.E. Karnal 9896260977.  
HEMANT SHARMA, Advocate,  
Chamber No. 47, District Courts, Karnal

ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਨੋਟਿਸ

ਜੇ ਪੂਰਵਾਲ ਅਰਾਈਜ਼ੀ ਬਹੁਮੱਤਰੀ ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾ ਲਿਮਿਟਿਡ ਪੂਰਵਾਲ ਅਰਾਈਜ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਸਮੂਹ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਸਭਾ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀ ਦੇਸ਼ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਲੀਜ਼ਾ ਲਿਸਟਿਡ ਨਿਸ਼ਨਾਸਤਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਨਵੀਆਂ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਰਾਸ਼ਟਰੀਕਾਈਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਚੋਣ ਇਸਤਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੂਚੀਆਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਨਾਸਤਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹਨ। ਜੇਕਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਲਿਸਟਿਡ ਦੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਰੀ ਇਤਰਜ਼ਾ ਦੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉਹ ਲਿਸਟਿਡ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਤੀ 26.02.2024 ਨੂੰ ਸਮੇਂ ਦਫ਼ਤਰੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੱਕ ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ, ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਸੂਚੀਆਂ ਮਿਤੀ 27.02.2024 ਨੂੰ 11.00 ਵਜੇ ਸਵੇਰੇ ਇਸ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਦੇ ਅਮਰਾ ਨੰਬਰ 411, ਬੀ-ਬਲਾਕ, ਤੀਜੀ ਮੰਜਲ ਲਿਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕੀ ਕੰਪਲੈਕਸ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਨਿਸ਼ਤ ਮਿਤੀ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਇਤਰਜ਼ਾ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਚਾਰਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਇਹ ਚੋਣ ਸੂਚੀਆਂ ਲਿਖੇ ਕੰਮ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ, ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ, ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਵੇਰੀਆਂ ਜਾਂ ਸਕਰੀਨਾਂ ਹਨ। ਇਤਰਜ਼ਾਕਰਤਾ ਖੁਦ ਸੁਣਵਾਈ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ। ਅਗਲੇ ਮਿਤੀ ਦੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਦਿਨ ਨਾ ਅਣਿਆ ਜਾਂ ਉਸੇ ਦਿਨ ਹੀ ਚੋਣ ਲਿਸਟਿਡ ਦੀ ਵਾਪਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਵੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਇਹ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਅੱਜ ਮਿਤੀ 29.01.2024 ਨੂੰ ਨਿਸ਼ਨਾਸਤਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ।  
ਸਹੀ:- ਸਹਾਇਕ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ, ਸਹਿਕਾਰੀ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ, ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II  
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, CHANDIGARH (DRT 3)  
Ground Floor, SCO No.33-34-35, Sector-17-A,  
Chandigarh-160017

Notice of Early Hearing  
Notice under Section 25 to 28 of The Recovery of Debts & Bankruptcy Act, 1993 and Read With Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961  
RC/1611/2018 29.01.2024

UNION BANK OF INDIA  
Versus  
MAX EXPORT INC AND ORS

To  
(1) M/S MAX EXPORT INC PROP., PARMINDER SINGH S/o SH. PRITPAL SINGH, VILLAGE BAURA, RAHON ROAD, NEAR YOUNGMAN WOLLEN MILLS, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB),  
2nd Address  
SH. PARMINDER SINGH S/O SH. PRITPAL SINGH PROP. M/S MAX EXPORT INC, R/O 1108/10, FARID NAGAR, BASTI JODHEWAL, LUDHIANA-141 007  
(2) M/S SAHAJ INDUSTRIES PVT. LTD. REGD. OFFICE 1108/9, FARID NAGAR, LUDHIANA-141007 (PUNJAB) THROUGH ITS DIRECTOR SH. PARMINDER SINGH.  
(3) SH. PRITPAL SINGH S/O MR. DHANN SINGH R/o 1108/10, FARID NAGAR, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB)-141007. R/O H.NO. 1350 ST. NO. 6, NEAR PETROL PUMP, WARD NO. 18, KASHMIR NAGAR, LUDHIANA PUNJAB.

1. Whereas the Certificate Holder Bank has moved an application for early hearing in L.A. No. 6 of 2024 for release of Auction Money. Accordingly, the matter was taken on board today i.e. 24.01.2024.  
2. Take notice that the said application will be taken up for further proceeding 13.22.24 at 10:30 AM.  
3. You are hereby required to appear in person or through a Pleader Advocate duly instructed, as the case may be, at the aforesaid date and time.  
4. If you do not appear on the date of hearing, the proceeding shall be heard determined in your absence.  
Given under my hand and Seal of this Tribunal on 29th Day of January, 2024 at Chandigarh  
Recovery Officer-II  
DRT-III, Chandigarh



Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, SCO 132 133 134 Sector-9C, Madhya Marg, Chandigarh- 160017

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUE E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]  
Notice for sale of movable assets  
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.  
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described movable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Pankaj Bhudiraja (Applicant), LAN No. LAAMB00039101342	MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA LTD MARUTI SWIFT DZIRE VDI Yr. of Mfg.: 2019 Registration No.: HR01AT4260	Rs. 6,55,476/- as on January 23, 2024	Rs. 3,60,000/- Rs. 36,000/-	February 05, 2024 from 11:00 AM to 02:00 PM	February 22, 2024 from 11:00 AM to 02:00 PM

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link <https://www.cartradeexchange.com>) of our auction agency CarTrade. The Mortgagees/ noticees are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till February 21, 2024 before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per schedule. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit their offer along with the earnest money deposit (refer column E) in a sealed envelope that mentions "Offer for purchase of property" to ICICI Bank Limited, SCO 132 133 134 Sector-9C, Madhya Marg, Chandigarh- 160017 or to our marketing agency CarTrade at ShriramAutomall India Ltd., 7th Floor Best Business Park, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura Delhi- 110034 on or before February 21, 2024 before 05:00 PM. The marketing agency has also been engaged as auctioneer for proper conduct of auction. Earnest Money Deposit DD/P.O should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Chandigarh.  
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 8355859934/8584874809 or CarTrade at 9958769761. Tenders which are acknowledged by the Bank/e-auction vendor official and registered before the cut-off time with complete details shall only be considered for auction.  
The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.  
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit [www.icicibank.com/n4p4s](http://www.icicibank.com/n4p4s)  
Date : January 31, 2024  
Place: Ambala

Authorised Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051  
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059  
Branch Address: SCO No -121, Sector 17, 1st floor, Commercial Belt, Jagadhari Road, Yamuna Nagar- 135003  
Branch Address: SCO 154, 1st floor, Red Square Market, UE-1, Near Telephone Exchange, Hisar- 125001  
Branch Address: Shanti Complex, 1st floor, Building No. 4307/12-14, Jagadhari Road, Opposite Civil Hospital, Ambala Cantt- 133001  
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ("ICICI HFC") and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Manmeet Singh (Borrower), Manjeet Kaur (Co-Borrower), Village Haibatpur, Haibatpura 17 Karnal, Karnal Karnal Haryana- 132041. LHYGR00001318336	Khawat No.634 Khatoni No.693 Khasra No.132/6/7 Waka Rakba Ladwa 79 Thanesar Distt Kurukshetra Haryana- 136118. Bounded By- North: House of Charanjeet Kaur, South: House of Indar Kumar, East: Street 23 Ft 1 Inch, West: Seller Plot. Haryana- 132041. LHYGR00001318336	11-01-2024 Rs. 8,99,617/-	03-01-2024
2.	Ramesh Kumar (Borrower), Kamlesh Rani (Co-Borrower), 49 Manglaur Jagadhari Yamunanagar Haryana- 135012. LHYGR00001377008	Khawat No.557 Khatoni No.615 Khasra No.257 Part Bakdar 1M 2 Sarsai and Total Area 4M Waka Village Manglore Tehsil Bilaspur Distt. Yamuna Nagar Na Yamunanagar Haryana- 135001. Bounded By- North: Property of Transferor, South: Street, East: Street 04' Wide, West: Property of Hari Ram.	11-01-2024 Rs. 14,05,724/-	03-01-2024
3.	Ramesh Kumar (Borrower), Kamlesh Rani (Co-Borrower), 49 Manglaur Jagadhari Yamunanagar Haryana- 135012. LHYGR00001377009	Khawat No.557 Khatoni No.615 Khasra No.257 Part Bakdar 1M 2 Sarsai and Total Area 4M Waka Village Manglore Tehsil Bilaspur Distt. Yamuna Nagar Na Yamunanagar Haryana- 135001. Bounded By- North: Property of Transferor, South: Street, East: Street 04' Wide, West: Property of Hari Ram.	11-01-2024 Rs. 37,424/-	03-01-2024
4.	Sunil Kumar (Borrower), Mahavir (Co-Borrower), H No.343 Bhoda Hoshnak 95, Fatehabad, Agroha, Haryana-125047. NHSIR00001294981	Khawat No.54 Khatoni No.71 Khasra No.125 (2-0) Tadadi 2 Canal KA 39/160, Part Bakdar 9 Marle 7 Sarsai, Village Bhoda Hoshnak Tehsil and Distt Fatehabad Haryana- 125050. Bounded By- North: Street 27 Ft, South: Agri Land of Other, East: Property of Diwan Chandelra 98 Ft 4 Inch, West: Property of Ransingh Jan Gra 98 Ft 4 Inch.	11-01-2024 Rs. 8,24,117.4/-	03-01-2024
5.	Sunil Kumar (Borrower), Mahavir (Co-Borrower), H No.343 Bhoda Hoshnak 95, Fatehabad, Agroha, Haryana-125047. NHSIR00001294982	Khawat No.54 Khatoni No.71 Khasra No.125 (2-0) Tadadi 2 Canal KA 39/160, Part Bakdar 9 Marle 7 Sarsai, Village Bhoda Hoshnak Tehsil and Distt Fatehabad Haryana- 125050. Bounded By- North: Street 27 Ft, South: Agri Land of Other, East: Property of Diwan Chandelra 98 Ft 4 Inch, West: Property of Ransingh Jan Gra 98 Ft 4 Inch.	11-01-2024 Rs. 4,26,098.6/-	03-01-2024
6.	Ramesh Kumar (Borrower), Kanchan (Co-Borrower), Shanti (Co-Borrower), S/O Mahavir, V P O Dayal Singh Colony Hansi, Hissar Hansi Haryana- 125033. NHHNS00001265192	Khawat No.4641 Khatoni No. 5863 Khasra No. 346/21/2/2(3-17) Waka Dayal Singh Colony Hansi Haryana- 125033. Bounded By- North: Street, South: Property of Parkash, East: Property of Miker, West: Property of Rajesh.	11-01-2024 Rs. 6,72,371/-	03-01-2024
7.	Ramesh Kumar (Borrower), Kanchan (Co-Borrower), Shanti (Co-Borrower), S/O Mahavir, Village Dayal Singh Colony Hansi Hissar Hansi Haryana- 125033. NHHNS00001265194	Khawat No.4641 Khatoni No.5863 Khasra No. 346/21/2/2(3-17) Waka Dayal Singh Colony Hansi Haryana- 125033. Bounded By- North: Street, South: Property of Parkash, East: Property of Miker, West: Property of Rajesh.	11-01-2024 Rs. 3,52,637/-	03-01-2024
8.	Mukesh (Borrower), Renu (Co-Borrower), House No.80 Durga Nagar Ambala City Ambala Haryana-134003. LHAMB00001335609	Khata No.163 173 Hadbast No.115 Khatoni No.150 143 160 Khasra No.186 0 18 Inside Nagar Nigam Abadi Durga Nagar li Waka Rakba Nasirpur Hadbast No.115 Ambala Haryana- 134003. Bounded By- North: Land Other Owner and Muja 19 Feet 6 Inches, South: Rasta 27 Feet Wide and Muja 18 Feet 8 Inches, East: House Other Owner T Muza 48 Ft, West: House Other Owner & Muza Ft.,	11-01-2024 Rs. 10,20,936/-	03-01-2024
9.	Mukesh (Borrower), Renu (Co-Borrower), House No.80 Durga Nagar Ambala City Ambala Haryana-134003. LHAMB00001335641	Khata No.163 173 Hadbast No.115 Khatoni No.150 143 160 Khasra No.186 0 18 Inside Nagar Nigam Abadi Durga Nagar li Waka Rakba Nasirpur Hadbast No.115 Ambala Haryana- 134003. Bounded By- North: Land Other Owner and Muja 19 Feet 6 Inches, south: Rasta 27 Feet Wide And Muja 18 Feet 8 Inches, east: House Other Owner T Muza 48 Ft, west: House Other Owner & Muza Ft.,	11-01-2024 Rs. 53,807/-	03-01-2024

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : January 31, 2024  
Place: Kurukshetra, Yamunanagar, Fatehabad, Ambala, Hansi ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE



Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005.

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Rahul Kumar/ Babita (LBMRT00006204003) & 42 BN BSF, R.S. Pura, Near J And K Bank, Jammu And Kashmir Jammu- 181102	Plot No 23, Khasra No.2966, Situated At Tihal Mohalla, Kasba Mawana Kalan, Pargana Hastinapur, Near Fire Brigade Office District Meerut Uttar Pradesh 250401	22/12/2023 Rs. 15,305/-	07/10/2023
2.	Rahul Kumar/ Babita (LBMRT00006151626) & 42 BN BSF, R.S. Pura, Near J And K Bank, Jammu And Kashmir Jammu- 181102	Plot No 23, Khasra No.2966, Situated At Tihal Mohalla, Kasba Mawana Kalan, Pargana Hastinapur, Near Fire Brigade Office District Meerut Uttar Pradesh 250401	22/12/2023 Rs. 70,931/-	07/10/2023
3.	Rahul Kumar/ Babita (LBMRT00006060334) & 42 BN BSF, R.S. Pura, Near J And K Bank, Jammu And Kashmir Jammu- 181102	Plot No 23, Khasra No.2966, Situated At Tihal Mohalla, Kasba Mawana Kalan, Pargana Hastinapur, Near Fire Brigade Office District Meerut Uttar Pradesh 250401	22/12/2023 Rs. 4,96,509/-	07/10/2023
4.	Rahul Kumar/ Babita (LBMRT00006060333) & 42 BN BSF, R.S. Pura, Near J And K Bank, Jammu And Kashmir Jammu- 181102	Plot No 23, Khasra No.2966, Situated At Tihal Mohalla, Kasba Mawana Kalan, Pargana Hastinapur, Near Fire Brigade Office District Meerut Uttar Pradesh 250401	22/12/2023 Rs. 20,69,031/-	07/10/2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : January 31, 2024  
Place : Jammu

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited



Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramala Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kuria (West), Mumbai- 400 070.  
CIN:L65910MH1984PLC032639, Web Side: [www.piramalfinance.com](http://www.piramalfinance.com)  
Branch Address: Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West)- 400062.  
DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited(PCHF) [formerly known as Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.(DHFL)] under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHF, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to PCHF by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Description of secured asset (Immovable property)
(LC No. 13100000689 of Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Kapil Khanna (Borrower) Anupama Khanna (Co-Borrower 1)	16-01-2024/ Rs. 37,79,518/- (Thirty Seven Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Five Hundred Eighteen Only) NPA (09-01-2024)	Flat No-904, 9th Floor Tower-T-11 Spire Wood, Sector-103 Gurgaon Gurgaon Haryana :- 122005
(LC No. 12900000326 of Faridabad Branch) Sunil Gulihar (Borrower) Sudha Gulihar (Co-Borrower 1)	03-01-2024/ Rs. 35,24,560/- (Thirty Five Lakh Twenty Four Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Only) NPA (06-05-2019)	Unit No. PWL/ B-23 Era Green Work Sector-8 Palwal Haryana- 121102
(LC No. 13000000412 of Gurugram- MG Road Branch) Nitin Maheshwari (Borrower) Renu Singh (Co-Borrower 1)	16-01-2024/ Rs. 1,12,25,861.58/- (Rs. One Crore Twelve Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty One Only and Fifty Eight Paise) NPA (04-12-2018)	Unit No 12A03 Thirteenth Floor Tower B The Aranya Plot No G H 02 Sector 119 Distt Gautam Budh Nagar Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh:- 201301
(LC No. 19600041363 of Gurugram- MG Road Branch) Shukjit Mann (Borrower) Karan Mann (Co-Borrower 1)	18-01-2024/ Rs. 3,82,54,888.78/- (Rs. Three Crore Eighty Two Lakh Fifty Four Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Eight Only and Seventy Eight Paise) NPA (30-09-2020)	Unit No PhY/ 20th & 21st Floor Tower Q Pan Oasis Sector 70 Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh :- 201301
(LC No. 13000000448 of Gurugram- MG Road Branch) Rashi Chawla (Borrower) Manoj Chandhok (Co-Borrower 1)	16-01-2024/ Rs. 1,34,94,531.58/- (Rs. One Crore Thirty Four Lakh Ninety Four Thousand Five Hundred Thirty One Only and Fifty Eight Paise) NPA (04-12-2018)	Unit No 12A03, 12A/ 13th Floor Tower H The Aranya (Aranya Height) Plot No Gh 02 Sec119 Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh:- 201301
(LC No. 11900001153 of Noida- Sector 2 Branch) Sareef Ahmed (Borrower) Aaisha (Co-Borrower 1)	18-01-2024/ Rs. 1,31,39,616.58/- (Rs. One Crore Thirty One Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Sixteen Only and Fifty Eight Paise) NPA (09-12-2018)	Flat No 1902 18th Floor Tower D1 Gh 02







# Win some, lose some

Nitish switching sides leaves the INDIA bloc in confusion but limits his own bargaining power

In a move that did not leave many seasoned politicians flabbergasted, JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar has executed a somersault by rejoining the BJP alliance barely 18 months after he walked out of the NDA, spilling bad blood all around. Importantly, his latest move saw Nitish abandoning the plank of Opposition unity, which he was passionately championing until very recently. In fact, he was the de facto convener of the INDIA bloc, which has been cobbled together to take on the BJP's national might. As a prime mover of the INDIA bloc, Nitish's departure puts a cloud over the coalition's future, which may have to undergo a realignment, potentially impacting its cohesiveness and effectiveness. However, there is more to this development than meets the eye: While it certainly is a major setback for the Opposition, what with Mamata Banerjee and Bhagwant Mann already having announced to go it alone in their respective States of West Bengal and Punjab, it provides an obvious edge to the BJP while straitjacketing Nitish from performing any more antics, at least till the Bihar Assembly elections next year.

The lack of communication between Bihar Chief Minister Nitish and his deputy, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, is said to have compounded their unease with each other. Matters did not help when Central agencies started questioning Tejashwi's mother and sister in the alleged land-for-jobs scam. The BJP's inclination towards a representative from an extremely backward caste or a prominent Other Backward Classes (OBC) group adds complexity to the situation. Nitish has the additional duty of ensuring that Bihar adds

handsomely to the NDA's kitty in the general elections. Nitish's decision to realign with the BJP has far-reaching consequences, influencing not only his political trajectory but also the future dynamics of the NDA and INDIA bloc. Interestingly, the Bihar developments coincide with Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra entering the State. It is sure to have a dampening effect on the Congress' campaign and lower its confidence considerably. However, nothing can be said with finality about Nitish. It will all depend on the understanding he has with the BJP and how the latter treats him. His switch was ostensibly prompted by the treatment he received from his INDIA partners. During alliance meetings, clashes of aspirations and perceived attempts by the RJD to expand its influence within the JD(U) hint at a shifting power dynamic. Nitish's political somersault and his realignment with the BJP have unleashed a series of ripple effects that extend far beyond the borders of Bihar. The departure of this seasoned politician from the INDIA bloc has injected an element of uncertainty into the political equations, casting shadows over the future cohesion and effectiveness of the coalition. The nation observes closely as this strategic realignment unfolds, shaping the future contours of Indian politics.



Artistes perform during the presentation of the best tableau in the Republic Day parade, in New Delhi

# Masterstroke or political Harakiri?

Nitish Kumar has rejoined forces with the BJP, cementing his reputation as a leader known for frequent shifts in political alliances for personal benefit

On Sunday, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar threw a bombshell by leaving the ruling Mahagathbandhan in Bihar and returning to the NDA coalition. He also quit the opposition coalition which he had built eight months ago. This dismantling of the bloc has dealt a significant blow to the INDIA bloc at the national level. They missed the slim chance of defeating the BJP in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. It is worth exploring how Bihar's politics may affect the national landscape. Kumar's decision to return to the NDA fold could benefit the BJP but weaken the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Congress in Bihar. It could ultimately impact the opposition bloc at the national level. This BJP- J.D. (U) partnership could improve the chances of the BJP winning more seats in the upcoming 2024 general elections and help Modi achieve a hat trick.

The BJP tried to break the opposition coalition and partner with the J.D. (U) alliance. The Party sees Nitish Kumar as a critical ally in Bihar and believes their partnership can win in the 2024 elections. Kumar has only 45 seats in the current Assembly, while the RJD and BJP have 78 and 79 seats, respectively. Despite this, Nitish managed to continue as the chief minister. Did the Congress party have a hand in Nitish Kumar's departure from the IN.D.I.A. opposition bloc? The reason behind this setback was the decision to sideline Nitish and promote Congress. Kumar accused the Party of being responsible for the failed alliance, arguing that the situation arose due to poor communication. KC Tyagi of the Janata Dal-United (JDU) has levelled accusations against the Congress party that it conspired to dominate the Opposition bloc. On January 13th in Mumbai, the Chief (CPI-M) Sitaram Yechori proposed Nitish Kumar as the convener of the bloc. This suggestion was supported by most of the other leaders present. However, Rahul Gandhi voiced his disagreement. Mamata



Banerjee subsequently proposed the name of Congress chief Kharge as the coalition chief, a move Tyagi claims was part of a broader conspiracy. Tyagi stated that Nitish Kumar mobilised an alliance that united all non-Congress parties. However, it is now disintegrating. The situation in Punjab and Bihar is on the verge of collapse, and the coalition in West Bengal is also falling apart. Nitish confirmed that he left the INDIA alliance because it didn't meet his expectations. He felt he was the only one working towards the coalition's goals. Although the partnership has brought together all non-Congress parties, the alliance disintegrated in West Bengal and almost collapsed in Bihar and Punjab. There is also an untold story. Lalu Yadav, the leader of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), encouraged Nitish Kumar to form an opposition coalition at the national level to aim for the position of Prime Ministerial candidate. The purpose of this plan was to pave the way for Lalu Yadav's son to become the Chief Minister. However, the plan

LALU YADAV, THE LEADER OF THE RASHTRIYA JANATA DAL (RJD), ENCOURAGED NITISH KUMAR TO FORM AN OPPOSITION COALITION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL TO AIM FOR PRIME MINISTERSHIP

failed when Mallikarjun Kharge was chosen as the leader of the new coalition. Consequently, Nitish Kumar sided with the (BJP). Kumar's credibility has been tarnished because of his unwavering desire to hold power, regardless of the repercussions. He has changed political allegiances several times, always for his benefit, and currently holds the title of Chief Minister with the longest tenure. Nitish's track record shows that after exploring other options in 2013, Nitish Kumar left the BJP and allied with the RJD and Congress. After the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, he aligned with the BJP again and became the Chief Minister in 2020. However, two years later, Kumar left the BJP and formed a new government with the RJD and Congress. Now he has dumped the RJD. That is why he is called Palti Ram. Despite being an experienced politician, Nitish Kumar's frequent changes in stance have cost him the chance to be considered as a prime ministerial candidate for the opposition party, especially at

the age of 72. The BJP's dismantling of the INDIA bloc may facilitate Prime Minister Modi to win his third term. In Bihar, mobilising OBC votes to achieve electoral success is imperative. In November 2023, Bihar increased the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Extremely Backward Castes. It is unclear how long the Nitish and the BJP partnership will last. They may work together until the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, but what will happen afterwards is uncertain. The Bharatiya Janata Party may support Nitish only until the Lok Sabha polls and their support could decrease afterwards-some question whether the alliance will continue until the 2025 Bihar Assembly polls. Nitish has shown that it's possible to retain power by using clever bargaining skills and winning a few seats, even if only 4% of the electorate belongs to their caste. But one thing is sure: Given Nitish's track record, there could be other flip-flops.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

# A father's courageous fight against girl's sexual assault

Despite threats and coercion, Ranjit, supported by his resilient daughter, pursued justice with unwavering courage

When Ranjit took on the might of the powerful in his tribal village in Ranchi district, Jharkhand, to pursue action against the rapists of his 13-year-old daughter, he didn't think he would get justice. But he was still determined to go ahead. So, even though the village mukhiya was unresponsive and the police inspector on duty refused to file an FIR, Ranjit didn't give up. He called up the Superintendent of police who came to the station to help him file the case under the POCSO Act, leading to the arrest of the three perpetrators.

Thereafter began the real battle. Pressure was mounted from all sides to compromise by offering money to withdraw the case and, marriage to one of the perpetrators. Threats were made to burn their home, kill Ranjit and cause other physical harm to the family. Somehow he braved the storm, riding on the extraordinary and unwavering courage of his daughter, (the sexual assault survivor), who stood firm in her fight for justice.

After a year of struggle, including withstanding



humiliation in court from the public prosecutor, Ranjit and his daughter were vindicated when the verdict came in their favour and the three were sentenced to 25 years of rigorous imprisonment. In a country where rape is reported every 20 minutes and conviction rates are less than 30%, this success inspired filmmaker Nisha Pahuja to document Ranjit and his daughter's dogged fight for justice. To Kill A Tiger, which took eight years to film, has been nominated for the Best Documentary Feature for the 2024 Oscar awards. The survivor, who is now 20, went on to complete school. She hopes to show other survivors like her, that girls are not to blame for sexual assaults and that is why she agreed to reveal her face in the

film. But had her father Ranjit not stood up for her, she may have remained just another statistic in crime records. Ranjit attributes his ability to withstand all pressures and to raise his voice for justice to the training he received through an intervention engaging men as responsible partners and caring fathers in the context of gender equality and child rights.

Initiated by the Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ) in Jharkhand in 2015, this program developed innovative ways to work with men and boys on issues of masculinities. Implemented in three districts in partnership with NGOs Srijan in Ranchi, Chotanagpur Sanskritik Sangh (CSS) in Gumla and Sahyogini in Bokaro, the intervention was able to reduce gender differences in the burden of household and care work and, reduce gender disparities in education, according to an independent evaluation of the programme. Importantly, it reduced gender-based violence in families and villages engaged in the intervention. This assessment found positive mindset changes in atti-

tudes towards child marriage sexual harassment of women/girls and policing of sisters/daughters by brothers/fathers. Male members of the program questioned their violent masculinities, began exercising less 'power over' their women relatives supported them more, and started challenging norms on masculinities.

This initiative, coupled with government and other NGO interventions, has helped to change two important community norms. It now believes that investment in education, especially girls' education and an increase in age at marriage is necessary. Initiatives like these engaging men and boys have shown that the journey towards more gender-transformative masculinities is possible. What makes it imperative to scale such interventions urgently is the disturbing increase in the incidence of rape between 2020 and 2022. In Ranjit's Ranchi district, figures suggest that approximately every 1.75 days there is an incident of rape.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views expressed are personal)

## THE BEHAVIOUR OF BUREAUCRATS

Sir — The idea of bureaucrats embodying exemplary conduct for the public takes a blow when incidents like the Singrauli SDM episode surface. His act of having a female employee tie his shoelace in public triggered outrage, highlighting the stark contrast between expected behaviour and reality. The swift transfer in response to public outcry via social media underscores the need for greater accountability and sensitivity among those entrusted with positions of power.

Such blatant abuse of authority cannot be tolerated, especially in public spaces. Moving forward, the government must prioritize not only competence but also ethical conduct when selecting officials for crucial roles. Common courtesy and respect for basic human dignity should be non-negotiable, forming the bedrock of every bureaucrat's interaction with the public. Only then can we rebuild trust and pave the way for a government that truly serves its people.

N Mateeni | Mumbai

## DILAPIDATED POST OFFICES

Sir — People are infuriated over the lackadaisical attitude of authorities towards improving the condition of the post offices in the country which has been lying in a dilapidated condition for a long. Residents have complained that even the name of the post office has not been displayed properly at most of the places. Moreover, the internet services fail to provide connectivity during peak hours. A member of the grievances redressal committee said higher authorities of the postal department had not shown any interest in improving the condition of the post office. The infrastructure of the post office needs to be improved. There is a need to beautify the staff counters to give a neat and clean look to these counters. There is also a need to provide better seating arrangements. There was also a need to recruit more staff at the post offices. Retires invest their hard-earned money, wait for hours and then become

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### IMD completes 150 years



Recently, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) celebrated its 150th year of establishment and service to the nation. On this memorable occasion, the IMD has launched several initiatives, such as 'The Weather Analysis and Forecast Enabling System

(WAFES Framework of Climate Services (NFCS)). Over the years, the IMD has been playing a significant role in weather forecasting and monsoon predictions. It plays a multidimensional role in the country's major affairs, conducting general elections, the launch of ISRO missions, and the growth of infrastructural and agricultural sectors.

The IMD faces a lot of challenges posed by changing climates and the ever-increasing demand for accurate and timely weather information. As the country navigates the complexities of its diverse weather patterns, perhaps the fusion of AI and traditional meteorological methods may well be the key to a more adaptive and efficient forecasting system, ultimately safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of the people of the country.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

disappointed without getting their hard-earned money. It is high time to heed the fact that the residents living in pensioner's paradise are put to the test every time they go to pick up their monthly earnings. It is time to have better working conditions in Post Offices.

C K Subramaniam | Chennai

## UGC DEGREE IN MARATHI

Sir — The University Grants Commission has taken major steps to provide degree and post-graduate education in other languages along with the Marathi language. Accordingly, a master's training program has been organized next month for professors to create educational materials. As a result of this, students will get a great opportunity to learn the local language in the coming academic years. Local language has been given priority in the national education policy. But the necessary educational materials are not available. As a result, many rural students are unable to study in the local language. Even during the three years of implementation of NEP, many course materials are not available in the

Marathi language. It will also be given. The support of the Indian Language Committee will be taken for this. Overall, this is good news in the background of the strangulation of the Marathi language going on in all areas. Today, children are not given education in their mother tongue in many places. If education is given in the mother tongue, children understand quickly and they understand anything immediately. Recently the volume of English has increased in all areas. In many places, Marathi schools are on the verge of closure. Even today, despite fulfilling all the conditions, the Marathi language does not get the status of the Abhijit language from the Centre. For that, it is necessary to try at all levels. Overall, it is necessary to give priority to Marathi in all fields. It is good news that Marathi is being included in degree and post-graduate education. It is expected to be implemented as soon as possible.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

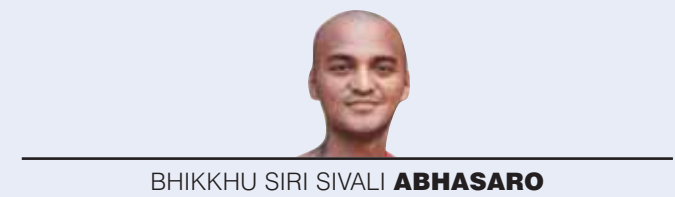
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FIRST COLUMN

AHIMSA: THE PATH TO PEACEFUL EXISTENCE

Buddhism’s essence lies in non-violence, compassion and enlightenment



BHIKKHU SIRI SIVALI **ABHASARO**

Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama, commonly known as the Buddha, is a philosophy and way of life that places great emphasis on the alleviation of suffering and the pursuit of enlightenment. Central to the teachings of Buddhism is the principle of non-violence, or "ahimsa," which holds a profound and essential role in shaping the ethical framework of this ancient spiritual tradition.

The Essence of Non-Violence in Buddhism:

- Compassion and Interconnectedness: Buddhism teaches that all beings are interconnected and share a common desire for happiness while seeking to avoid suffering. Non-violence stems from the understanding that causing harm to others ultimately results in harm to oneself. Compassion, a key tenet of Buddhism, encourages followers to cultivate empathy and extend benevolence to all living beings.
- The First Precept: The Five Precepts form the ethical guidelines for Buddhist practitioners, with the first precept explicitly stating, "I undertake the precept to refrain from taking life." This foundational principle underscores the sanctity of all life and emphasizes the commitment to non-violence as a fundamental aspect of ethical conduct.
- Karma and Consequences: Buddhism teaches the concept of karma, the law of cause and effect. Engaging in violent or harmful actions generates negative karma, which can have repercussions in this life or future lives. By practicing non-violence, individuals seek to break the cycle of negative karma, promoting a path towards enlightenment and liberation from suffering.



- Mindfulness and Contemplation: Buddhist practices, such as mindfulness meditation, cultivate awareness and self-reflection. Non-violence is not only manifested in physical actions but also in the thoughts and intentions of individuals. By developing mindfulness, practitioners strive to eliminate harmful thoughts and cultivate a mindset of kindness and non-harming.
- Conflict Resolution: Non-violence plays a crucial role in conflict resolution within Buddhist communities. Rather than resorting to aggression or retaliation, followers are encouraged to seek peaceful solutions through dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation. This approach aligns with the Buddha's teachings on skillful means to address conflicts without causing harm.
- Example of the Buddha: The life of the Buddha serves as a profound example of non-violence. From his renunciation of the royal life to his enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, the Buddha consistently demonstrated compassion and refrained from causing harm to any being, even in the face of adversity.

Non-violence, deeply rooted in the core principles of Buddhism, is a guiding force that shapes the ethical conduct of its followers. Through the practice of compassion, mindfulness, and the observance of the Five Precepts, Buddhists strive to create a world free from violence and suffering. By embracing the philosophy of non-violence, individuals embark on a transformative journey towards personal well-being, social harmony, and the ultimate goal of enlightenment.

*(The writer is a Buddhist monk and spiritual guide, views are personal)*

# Drones can revolutionise the agriculture sector



AS MITTAL

The Government’s inclination towards precision agriculture implies that drones are poised to become an integral component of cultivation practices



In Punjab, where drones remain associated mostly with dropping drugs and arms from Pakistan in border areas, now they are poised to gain a new skyline to revolutionise the agriculture sector.

Kiranpal Kaur of Sekha village in Barnala district, who has only completed her education up to class 10 and has never travelled in a plane, is now a trained drone pilot. She travels across the district to provide rental services for spraying fertilisers and pesticides and undertaking surveys to check for any crop damage in the fields. These Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are the cutting-edge solution for driving agriculture towards higher efficiency, sustainability and profitability.

To further empower rural women Self Help Groups (SHGs), the subsidised 'Namo Drone Didi' Scheme was launched in December last year with an outlay of Rs.1261 Crore for the period from 2024-25 to 2025-26. The scheme aims to equip and train at least 15,000 women SHGs. Kiranpal is among the first batch of 22 rural women SHGs in Punjab, out of 300 women SHGs across the country, to be equipped with Kisan drones.

**Potential:** The market cost of a high-end drone that can perform multiple tasks is approximately Rs 15 lakh. However, the government has introduced subsidised schemes that offer subsidies of Rs 4-8 lakh on each drone and a 3% interest subvention on loans. This initiative is expected to have a significant impact on the Indian agriculture drone market, which is projected to grow at an annual average rate of over 25% from 2024 to 2028. Additionally, the global market for agricultural drones is expected to reach USD 4.7 billion by the end of 2026, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 31.3% during the forecast period of 2024 to 2026. The increasing demand for agricultural drones, which have several applications such as field mapping, automated seeding, fertilizer sprayers, crop analysis, and imaging, is expected to propel market growth in the coming years.

The adoption of drone technology serves as an advanced decision support system



THE USE OF DRONES, EQUIPPED WITH HYPERSPECTRAL IMAGING TECHNOLOGY, HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN HOW WE PERCEIVE CROP HEALTH

that facilitates targeted intervention and reduces the wastage of critical resources such as water, chemicals, and fertilizers. The high-resolution imagery obtained from drones can provide valuable insights that enable targeted intervention and prevent the unnecessary application of treatments across the entire field. Moreover, drones can help convert the abstract concept of precision agriculture into multifaceted approaches through compelling data and actionable insights.

**Remote sensing and monitoring:** Effective monitoring of crop health is crucial for farmers to achieve maximum yield and profits. The use of drones equipped with hyperspectral imaging technology has brought a revolutionary change in how we perceive crop health. In a recent study, it was revealed that drones can detect pest infestations up to 2 weeks earlier than traditional monitoring methods. This early detection can potentially save up to 30% of the harvest that might otherwise be lost.

**Precision crop management:** Finding a balance between agricultural production and environmental preservation is crucial. The excessive use of chemicals and water scarcity can lead to environmental degradation, which is a pressing concern that the agriculture sector must address.

Drones can play a vital role in solving these issues by accurately identifying areas that require water. By doing so, farmers can reduce water usage by approximately 25%, thereby promoting sustainable agriculture.

Drones are not only useful for surveillance purposes, but when equipped with the right analytical capabilities, they can also provide actionable insights for real-time crop management. For example, by utilizing data collected and analyzed by drones, farmers can reduce fer-

tilizer usage by an average of 26% by applying it only where needed. This is not only beneficial from a financial perspective but also contributes to sustainable agriculture that reduces environmental impact.

**Efficient field scouting:** Given India's vast geographical expanse, monitoring remote or hard-to-reach farms is a unique challenge. Here, drones are an asset, reducing the hours of manual labour involved in field scouting to mere minutes. According to recent estimates, drones can cover 200 acres in just 30 minutes, offering timely and accurate data. It is valuable for smallholder farmers, who make up close to 68% of the Indian farming community, enabling them to act before a problem like a pest infestation becomes economically damaging. This efficiency in field scouting allows farmers to stay ahead of potential issues, even in remote or less accessible parts of their farms.

Instead of labour-intensive, time-consuming manual inspections, drones provide a cost-effective and timely alternative. According to the estimates prepared by IFFCO, a drone takes just around 8-10 minutes to spray one acre.

Data-driven decision-making: We are in an era where data-driven strategies are not the exception but the rule, and agriculture is keeping pace. Drones generate extensive datasets that offer an in-depth look into crop health, growth patterns, and other variables.

For example, a farmer can now optimise planting densities of sugarcane-based on drone-collected data, potentially increasing yields by up to 10%. Imagine a farmer in the heart of Punjab who can now use drone-acquired data to optimise planting densities, manage nutrients effectively, and plan their harvest with precision. Such data-driven decisions can lead to higher yields and, consequently, better profits.

**Cost savings:** In a sector where profit margins can be wafer-thin, drones serve as a cost-effective ally. Early detection of potential issues allows for timely and, therefore, less costly interventions. By helping farmers make data-backed decisions, drones help avert financial setbacks.

**Weather forecasting:** For a good yield, optimum weather remains crucial. Equipped with weather monitoring technology, drones can serve as weather stations in the sky, providing real-time data on the weather. This information is invaluable for planning farm operations and responding to changing weather patterns. In India, where monsoons can be a farmer's best friend or worst enemy, having up-to-the-minute weather data is a game-changer. It allows farmers to make informed decisions about when to plant, irrigate, or harvest, ultimately improving farm resilience.

**Conclusion:** The government's shows a growing affinity for precision agriculture suggests that drones are set to become an integral part of crop cultivation practices. By blending traditional farming expertise with advanced technology, farmers can anticipate a more optimistic and fruitful future. Moreover, the government can offset the 80% cost of drone adoption through significant savings on fertilizers and pesticides subsidies, as the use of drone technology leads to reduced consumption.

*(The Author is vice-chairman of Sonalika Group and vice-chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)*

# Charting a course for India’s maritime security

To strengthen its standing as a global leader in maritime security, it is imperative to adopt a robust Maritime Domain Awareness framework

The adoption of a robust Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) framework is crucial for addressing the challenges faced by maritime-dependent industries and nations worldwide. In order to demonstrate the necessary commitment towards the protection of marine infrastructure and maritime domains, India must strengthen its maritime security programmes by keeping the rapidly changing maritime geopolitics and emergence of diverse threats in attention. By prioritising research and development funding and promoting international MDA partnerships, India can position itself as the global leader in maritime security.

India's Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) concepts



PADMALOCHAN DASH

must undergo a significant transformation, shifting from traditional water surface-centric initiatives to embrace space-based monitoring and AI-driven Operational Technology (OT) systems. The focus on maritime security needs to extend beyond territorial limitations to encompass regional and global perspectives, recognizing the heightened competition in seas. Given India's substantial glob-

al role in maritime affairs, effective MDA models must be prioritized as a fundamental component of the maritime security outlook. This evolution is essential to proactively address emerging threats, enhance surveillance capabilities, and foster international collaboration in securing maritime interests.

In the context of multilateral Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) cooperation, the Maldives' geographical proximity to China's expansion goals and the rising maritime incidents underscore the critical need for vigilant maritime monitoring. Proactively addressing China's increasing influence in the South China Sea is imperative. Given its status as the largest stakeholder and the key actor in the Indian

Ocean Region, India must take the lead in institutionalizing MDA.

Recognising the inadequacy of limited national capacity to protect vast water expanses, this necessitates fostering multilateral cooperation, promoting inclusivity, and leveraging sophisticated technologies. As one of the largest maritime operators strategically positioned in the region, India should formalize a framework for multilateral MDA cooperation involving relevant parties. This initiative can facilitate access to robust yet affordable MDA resources, while also fostering intelligence sharing and joint exercises to collectively address diverse maritime security challenges.

India has demonstrated a strong commitment to

enhancing its Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) capabilities, particularly in the aftermath of the "26/11" attacks. Notable initiatives, such as the National Marine Domain Awareness (NMDA) project and the collaboration with France on the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) satellite constellation, highlight India's proactive efforts to create an integrated MDA network. To ensure a cohesive and successful MDA approach, there must be a focus on establishing a specialised coordination body, conducting regular audits, and evaluating past initiatives.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of maritime threats, the involvement of multiple stakeholders and adaptability to evolving scenarios are emphasized, contributing to the

resilience and effectiveness of the MDA framework.

Integrating current unmanned technology with human intelligence transforms marine security. India can lead maritime security by integrating these technology into marine plans faster. Real-time threat identification, thorough monitoring, vessel vetting, due diligence, and AI insights to optimise the MDA framework are required. Technology, especially AI, improves Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) for countries like India. For early threat detection, deliberate investments in cutting-edge surveillance and intelligence technology like ASVs, UAVs, and UUVs are necessary. Autonomous systems like ASVs, UAVs, and UUVs improve reaction and marine

security.

Initiatives such as the National Command, Control, Communication, and Intelligence (NC3I) network demonstrate the scope of MDA operations. Succinct and adaptable MDA is the result of periodic revisions in response to emerging threats and the active participation of experts from diverse disciplines. For autonomous system integration and preparation against emerging threats, a specialised task force, learning processes, and technology infrastructure updates are essential. It is imperative that collaborations be formed with academic institutions, research centres, and technological firms. Cybersecurity and interoperability assure MDA unmanned system security

and efficiency. Regular cybersecurity audits strengthen MDA systems against evolving cyber threats. India must modernise its technology and form new cybersecurity alliances to handle marine security issues. Since the "26/11" event, India's Navy and MDA have increased maritime security initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to securing the whole maritime domain. Recent successes in right-time detection and fast eradication of varied marine threats highlight MDA's naval operating concept evolution. Investment in naval personnel training and cutting-edge technology would help the Indian Navy meet MDA goals.

*(The Author is working with an Independent Think Tank; views are personal)*



# Imran, Qureshi sentenced to 10-year prison term

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Jailed former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan was sentenced to 10 years in prison by a special court on Tuesday for leaking state secrets, in a major blow to his bid to return to power in the February 8 general elections.

The decision to sentence Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi was announced by special court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain during the hearing of the case held at the special court in Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi established under the stringent Official Secrets Act. The 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician is already serving a three-year jail term after being convicted of corruption.

Khan's party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has faced numerous troubles starting with the denial of its election symbol, the cricket bat, to the rejection of nomination papers of Khan, Qureshi, 67, and a number of other party leaders. The controversy first emerged on March 27, 2022, when Khan — less than a



Gauhar Bano Qureshi, left, daughter, and Mehriene Qureshi, wife of Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a deputy leader of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan's 'Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf' party, speak with media following a special court decision, outside the Adiyala prison, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan on Tuesday. A Pakistani court on Tuesday sentenced former Prime Minister Khan and one of his party deputy Qureshi to 10 years in prison each, after finding them guilty of revealing official secrets. **AP/PTI**

month before his ouster in April 2022 — while addressing a public rally waved a letter before the crowd, claiming that it was a cipher from a foreign nation that had conspired with his political rivals to have his government

overthrown.

Khan did not reveal the contents of the letter nor did he mention the name of the nation it came from. But a few days later, he accused the US of conspiring against him and alleged that

Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Affairs Donald Lu had sought his removal. The cipher was about former Pakistan ambassador to the US Asad Majeed's meeting with Lu. The case was filed against Khan and Qureshi on August 15 last year by the Federal Investigation Agency, which accused both of violating the secrecy laws while handling the cable sent by the Pakistan embassy in Washington in March 2022. The verdict comes nine days before the February 8 general elections, which the PTI is contesting amid a state crack-down and without an electoral symbol.

Both Imran and Qureshi have been in jail in the run-up to the elections. While Imran's candidature was rejected, Qureshi was cleared to run for an NA seat from Thar. But today's conviction means that both of them have been disqualified from contesting elections for the next five years, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Both Khan and Qureshi had pleaded not guilty to their involvement in the offence relat-

ed to the alleged misuse of diplomatic cable for political purposes.

The PTI leaders confirmed the development by saying that it was a 'sham case with no access to media or public'.

"Legal team will challenge the decision in a higher court and hopefully will get this sentence suspended, given the poor proceedings of a case when Islamabad High Court had annulled proceedings twice, ordered access to media and public but on the contrary, access of legal team was denied, and a decision reached in a haste," the party said in WhatsApp message. "God willing kaptaan and vice kaptaan will be back soon, and this sentence will be (thrown) in the dustbin in the appeal stage," the party said. This is Imran's second conviction as he was also convicted in the Toshakhana corruption case on August 5, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. It was Qureshi's first conviction. The Islamabad High Court had suspended his sentence. However, a division bench had later rejected Imran's petition seeking the

suspension of the conviction.

At today's hearing held in the Adiala Jail, Khan and Qureshi were given a questionnaire under Section 342 (power to examine the accused) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

After Imran recorded his statement, the court asked him about the whereabouts of the cipher (diplomatic cable), to which the former prime minister replied: "I have said the same in my statement that I do not know. The cipher was in my office." The judge then sentenced the two leaders to 10 years in jail in the case. After announcing the verdict, the judge stepped out of the courtroom, at which Qureshi protested that his statement was not recorded. PTI leader Gohar Khan said that the special court judge had announced the verdict in haste, adding that proceedings were not being conducted in accordance with the law and the Constitution. "He asked questions himself and the way our witness was cross-examined, you cannot find any such examples in history," he said while speaking to the media outside the Islamabad High Court.

## Northern Ireland political party agrees to end 2-year boycott

AP ■ LONDON

Northern Ireland's largest British unionist party has agreed to end a boycott that left the region's people without a power-sharing administration for two years and rattled the foundations of the 25-year-old peace. The breakthrough could see the shuttered Belfast government restored within days. After a marathon late-night meeting, Democratic Unionist Party leader Jeffrey Donaldson said Tuesday that the party's executive had backed proposals to return to the government. He said agreements reached with the UK government in London "provide a basis for our party to nominate members to the Northern Ireland Executive, thus seeing the restoration of the locally elected institutions".

The breakthrough after months of inconclusive negotiations came after the UK government last week gave Northern Ireland politicians until Feb 8 to restore the Northern Ireland Assembly and the local government or face new elections. "All the conditions are in place for the Assembly to return," Northern Ireland Secretary Chris Heaton-Harris said. He said he would publish details of the UK government's new proposals on Wednesday, after briefing all of Northern Ireland's main political parties.

The DUP walked out in February 2022 in a dispute over post-Brexit trade rules. Ever since, it has refused to return to the government with the Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein. Under power-sharing rules established as part of Northern Ireland's peace process, the administration must include both British unionists and Irish nationalists.

The walkout left Northern Ireland's 1.9 million people without a functioning administration to make key decisions as the cost of living soared and backlogs strained the creaking public health system. Amid mounting public frustration, teachers, nurses and other pub-

lic sector workers staged a 24-hour strike this month calling on politicians to return to the government and give them a long-delayed pay raise. The British government has agreed to give Northern Ireland more than 3 billion pounds (\$3.8 billion) for its public services, but only if the executive in Belfast gets back up and running.

The political impasse in Northern Ireland stems from the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union and its borderless trading bloc after decades of membership. The DUP quit the government in opposition to new trade rules put in place after the UK left the EU in 2020 that imposed customs checks and other hurdles on goods moving to Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK.

The checks were established to maintain an open border between the north and its EU neighbour, the Republic of Ireland — a key pillar of the peace process that ended decades of violence in Northern Ireland. The DUP, though, says the new east-west customs border undermines Northern Ireland's place in the UK.

In February 2023, the UK and the EU agreed on a deal to ease customs checks and other hurdles for goods moving to Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK. But it was not enough for the DUP, which continued its government boycott. Donaldson said further measures agreed by the British government will "remove checks for goods moving within the UK and remaining in Northern Ireland and will end Northern Ireland automatically following future EU laws".

The DUP's decision faces opposition from some hard-line unionists, who fiercely guard Northern Ireland's place in the UK and say even light-touch post-Brexit checks create a de facto internal trade barrier. Dozens of protesters gathered outside the DUP meeting venue outside Belfast late Monday, waving placards saying, "Stop DUP sellout".

## Philippines, Vietnam agree to cooperate on disputed SCS

**Hanoi (Vietnam):** The Philippines and Vietnam signed an agreement Tuesday on preventing and managing incidents in the disputed South China Sea during Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.'s visit to Hanoi. Several countries, including the Philippines and Vietnam, are locked in maritime disputes with China over its claims of sovereignty over virtually the entire South China Sea, one of the world's most crucial waterways for shipping, and high-seas face offs between Chinese and Philippine ships have intensified over the past year in the contested waters, fuelling fears of a wider conflict.

The Philippines and Vietnam agreed Tuesday to increase coordination on maritime issues and work to promote trust and confidence, the Philippine government said in a statement. They didn't release

details about what actions they would take under the agreement. "Vietnam remains the sole strategic partner of the Philippines in the ASEAN region," Marcos said during a meeting with his Vietnamese counterpart, Vo Van Thuong, referring to the regional grouping of Southeast Asian nations.

He added that while maritime cooperation was the "foundation" for this partnership, relations between the two nations had expanded. The two countries also signed a deal on Tuesday for Vietnam to supply the Philippines with 1.5 million to 2 million metric tons (1.6 to 2.2 million US tons) of rice each year at affordable prices.

Vietnamese rice accounts for 85 per cent of imported rice in the Philippines and the two countries agreed to create a framework for ensuring stable supplies. **AP**

## Israeli undercover forces kill 3 militants

AP ■ JENIN

Israeli forces disguised as civilian women and medical workers stormed a hospital on Tuesday in the occupied West Bank, killing three Palestinian militants in a dramatic raid that underscored how deadly violence has spilled into the territory from the war in Gaza. The Palestinian Health Ministry said Israeli forces opened fire inside the wards of the Ibn Sina Hospital in the town of Jenin. The ministry condemned the raid and called on the international community to pressure Israel's military to halt such operations in hospitals. A hospital spokesperson said there was no exchange of fire, indicating that it was a targeted killing. The military said the militants were using the hospital as a hide-out, without providing evidence. It alleged that one of those targeted in the raid had transferred weapons and ammunition to others for a planned attack, purportedly inspired by the Hamas assault on southern Israel on October 7 that triggered the



Smoke rises following an Israeli bombardment in the Gaza Strip, as seen from southern Israel on Tuesday. **AP/PTI**

war in Gaza.

Footage said to be security camera video from the hospital that circulated on social media showed about a dozen undercover forces, most of them armed, dressed as women with Muslim headscarves or hospital staff in scrubs or white doctor's

coats. One in a surgical mask carried a rifle in one arm and a folded wheelchair in the other. The forces were seen patting down one man who kneeled against a wall, his arms raised. The Associated Press has not independently verified the footage, but it is in line with its

## US, Chinese officials hold meeting in Bangkok: WH

**Washington (PTI):** US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi held more than 12 hours of meetings in Bangkok, the White House said Monday. "Over the weekend, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan held more than 12 hours of meetings in Bangkok with his counterpart from the People's Republic of China, Director Wang Yi," John Kirby, NSC Coordinator for Strategic Communications at the White House told reporters at a news conference here.

"Sullivan and Director Wang took stock of progress on key issues following the meeting between President (Joe) Biden and (Chinese) President Xi (Jinping) back in November. Now, that includes discussing efforts to resume military-to-military communication, which has occurred; addressing artificial intelligence safety and risks; and advancing bilateral counter-narcotics cooperation," Kirby said.

In fact, the launch of a working group on counter-narcotics will begin Tuesday in Beijing. The US delegation will be led by Deputy Homeland Security Advisor Jen Daskal.

"The two sides also held constructive discussions on global and regional issues, including those related to Russia's war against Ukraine; the Middle East, of course; the DPRK; the South China Sea; and Burma. And they also discussed cross-Strait issues," Kirby said.

At a separate news conference with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed that the United States and other allies engage with China in dialogue on issues of mutual concern, like climate change and arms control.

## China protests deportations of its students

AP ■ BEIJING

The Chinese government has protested to the United States over the treatment of Chinese arriving to study in America, saying some have been interrogated for hours, had their electronic devices checked and in some cases were forcibly deported from the country. Xie Feng, the Chinese ambassador in Washington, said dozens of Chinese holding valid visas have been denied entry over the past few months when returning to school from overseas travel or visiting relatives in China, according to a post on the Chinese Embassy website.

"When they landed at the airport, what awaited them was an eight-hour-long interrogation by officers who prohibited them from contacting their parents, made groundless accusations against them and even forcibly repatriated them and banned their entry," he said on Sunday at an event at



the embassy on student exchanges. "This is absolutely unacceptable." The protest comes as the US and China try to boost student and other exchanges to shore up their relations, which have turned confrontational in recent years over trade, technology, human rights and, more fundamentally, the future direction of the world. Nearly 290,000 Chinese students are in the US, about one-third of the foreign students in the country, according to the embassy post. China has

more than 1.3 million students studying abroad, more than any other country, it said.

In a separate online statement, the Chinese Embassy said it had made "solemn representations" to the US government about the treatment of students arriving at Dulles airport in Washington, D.C. The statement reminded Chinese students to be cautious when entering through the airport.

It wasn't clear whether Xie's comments referenced cases only at Dulles or at other

entry points as well. China's state media have reported at least three cases since November at Dulles where Chinese students lost their valid student visas, received a five-year entry ban and were repatriated following long hours of interrogations.

They were asked if their studies were financed by the Chinese government, if they were members of the Chinese Communist Party or its youth arm, and if their research was linked to the Chinese government, the Chinese military or key state laboratories. The students were headed to the National Cancer Institute, Yale University and the University of Maryland respectively.

At least eight Chinese entering the US with valid documents were repatriated since November, according to state media reports. The US Department of Homeland Security and the American Embassy in Beijing did not respond to requests for comment.

## Macron gets ceremonial welcome in Sweden

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

French President Emmanuel Macron was welcomed on Tuesday with pomp and ceremony at the start of a two-day state visit to Sweden during which he will meet Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and the king, King Carl XVI Gustaf.

Macron and his wife, Brigitte, were greeted by the king in the inner courtyard of the downtown Stockholm royal castle that is the official residence of the Swedish royals. There, Macron and Carl Gustaf reviewed members of the Grenadier Guards that had lined up.

Macron noted that it had been too long since a French president visited Sweden — the last time was in 2000, when Jacques Chirac traveled to the Scandinavian country. "My visit is therefore first and fore-

most to renew our friendship, our partnership in the European Union, and as Sweden prepares to join NATO, our alliance," Macron said. Later Tuesday, Macron is to discuss the future of European security at a military academy in Stockholm, together with Kristersson and the king. Russia's war on Ukraine and Sweden's NATO application are likely to be on the table.

After more than a year of delays, Türkiye earlier this month completed its ratification of Sweden's bid to join NATO, meaning Hungary is now the last member of the military alliance not to have given its approval. All NATO countries must agree before a new member can join the alliance. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Sweden and neighbouring Finland abandoned their traditional positions of military nonalignment

to seek protection under NATO's security umbrella. Finland joined the alliance last year.

On Wednesday, Macron and his wife are to travel to Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, in southern Sweden, where they will visit a European multidisciplinary research facility under construction and visit a company to discuss green technologies. At home, Macron's government faces angry farmers who have camped out around Paris. They demand better pay, fewer constraints and lower costs. On Monday, they encircled Paris with traffic-snarling barricades, using hundreds of tractors and hay bales to block highways leading to the capital. The French president initially was to travel to Sweden in late October, but the visit was postponed due to the Gaza war that began with Hamas' attack in southern Israel on October 7.

## Indian student who went missing at Purdue University confirmed dead

**Washington (PTI):** An Indian student pursuing a double major at the prestigious Purdue University in the US state of Indiana, who went missing on Sunday, has been confirmed dead, the university has said.

Tiptecanoe County Coroner's Office officials were called around 11:30 a.m. on Sunday to 500 Allison Road in West Lafayette for a possible dead body. Upon arrival, a "college-aged male" was found deceased outside Maurice J. Zucrow Laboratories on Purdue's campus. Neel Acharya went missing on Sunday. "It is with great sadness that I inform you that one of our students Neel Acharya has passed away. The leadership in the Department of Computer Science expresses our profound sorrow for his passing. I

am deeply saddened by his loss. My condolences go out to his friends family and all affected," Chris Clifton, interim head of the university's Computer Science Department, said in an email to the department on Monday.

Clifton said Neel was a driven individual and academically talented. He pursued a double major in computer science and data science and was a John Martinson Honors College student. "He aspired to pursue numerous academic achievements and shared profound connections with friends. He was very proud of and cared deeply for his brothers at Triangle Fraternity. Neel could be counted on to reach out to others and make them feel included. He was an achiever and an includer, with

his: most notable qualities being genuine kindness and unwavering compassion," Clifton said. Clifton told the local Purdue Exponent newspaper that he received an email from the Office of the Dean of Students confirming Acharya's death. "A deceased person was found that matched Neel's description and had Neel's ID on (him)," he said.

Goury Acharya, the mother of the dead student, in a post on X on Monday, said: "Our son Neel Acharya has been missing since yesterday January 28 (12:30 AM EST) He is studying at Purdue University in the US. He was last seen by the Uber driver who dropped him off at Purdue University. We are looking for any info on him. Please help us if you know anything."

## 'Universe chants Jai Shree Ram' aerial banner enthral Indian-Americans

**Houston (PTI):** "Universe Chants Jai Shree Ram" aerial banner across the US city of Houston enthralled Indian Americans as the excitement of the inauguration of the Ram Mandir continues to thrill the community members days after the spectacular ceremony in Ayodhya. After recent freeze and rain, devotees dressed in ethnic wear, waving saffron flags and chanting "Jai Shree Ram", gathered at the Gujrat Samaj of Houston and other venues on Sunday to watch the spectacle.

The pilot of the aircraft on which the banner was flown was also greeted by resounding chants of "Jai Shri Ram". The organisers spread the word about the first-of-its-kind aerial banner crossing across Houston on Sunday between 1-3 p.m. through a flier "Embracing the

Skies, the Universe Chants Jai Shri Ram". The devotees stayed glued to the sky across the city as the flier read: "Keep an eye on the sky and chant Jai Shri Ram when you see the plane in your area with the above message." Umang Mehta, the organiser of the aerial show, told PTI: "The project was designed to celebrate the opening of Shri Ram Temple after 500 years of long struggle of sacrifice and determination and send a refreshing message that resonated with members of the Hindu community in a captivating and unforgettable way." Besides being the first word heard from the moon, Houston earned another feather in the cap, with this aerial banner. It was an effective way to share our joy with the world, as this is probably the first time in history that an aerial banner

hailing Shri Ram was flown anywhere in the world," Dr Kusum Vyas, another organiser helping the project, said.

The aerial banner project was conceived by Umang Mehta and assisted by Dr. Kusum Vyas, Saurabh Shandilya, Achalesh Amar, and Anant Srivastava with support from the International Hindi Association (IHA). "The clear skies were lit up with Shri Ram chants, a proud divine moment, which amalgamated culture and Indian pride, on the occasion of 'Pran Pratishtha in Ayodhya,'" said Swapan Dhairyan, trustee IHA.

Capturing rare moments of the view, Saurabh Shandilya said: "The city experienced an enchanting view as the banner adorned the skies, contributing a cultural vibrancy to our diverse atmosphere."

## Indian-origin couple convicted in UK

**London (PTI):** An Indian-origin couple in the UK, whose extradition was sought by India, has been convicted of exporting more than half a tonne of cocaine to Australia after an investigation found that they were behind a front company that had sent the drugs by plane under a cover load of metal toolboxes.

Arti Dhir, 59, and Kavaljitsinh Rajjada, 35, from Hanwell in Ealing were identified by the National Crime Agency (NCA) investigators after Australian Border Force intercepted the cocaine worth 57 million pounds upon its arrival in Sydney in May 2021, the agency said in a statement on Monday.



# Maldives govt approaches SC over Pres impeachment bid

PTI ■ MALE

Even as the main opposition announced its plan to impeach Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, the government has approached the Supreme Court over the recent amendment to Parliament's standing orders which makes the process of impeachment easier, according to media reports on Tuesday.

The Attorney General's Office filed the case on Sunday, the same day when clashes broke out in the House between pro-government MPs and opposition lawmakers following differences over the approval of four members of his cabinet.

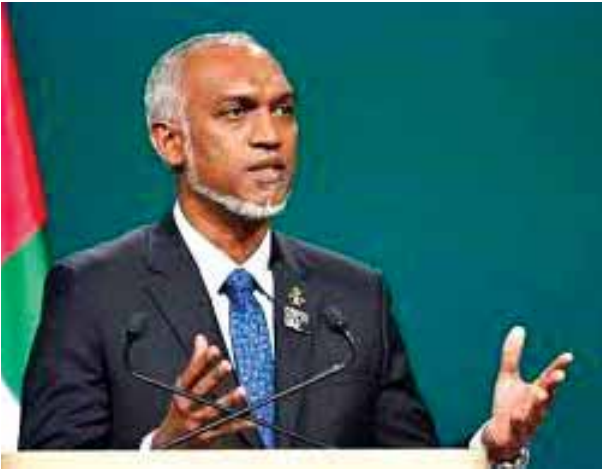
The main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), which holds a majority in the Maldivian Parliament, on Monday, had stalled

approval of three members of President Mohamed Muizzu's cabinet.

Soon after, the MDP had announced that it planned to submit a motion to impeach President Muizzu and that it already started gathering signatures for the same.

The three ministers were, however, re-appointed by Monday evening. The whole row about allowing or not of the three ministers started after seven lawmakers resigned from Parliament in November, to assume top positions in Muizzu's administration.

"But the Elections Commission decided against holding by-elections as the parliamentary elections are scheduled for this year," online news portal Sun.mv reported on Tuesday. Taking advantage of the situation, the main oppo-



sition MDP amended Parliament's standing orders so that vacated seats aren't counted when determining the total number of MPs, it said.

Therefore, Parliament cur-

rently requires 54 votes to impeach President Muizzu, instead of the previous 58, as, according to the amendment to the standing orders, the total number of MPs is now 80,

instead of 87. Last week, the MDP and the Democrats announced an alliance to work together in the Parliament "to hold the government accountable." "The MDP and Democrats, have 56 MPs between them; 43 MPs from MDP, and 13 from Democrats. They, therefore, have the power to impeach the president, if they wish," Sun.com said.

Attorney General Ahmed Usham told Sun.com on Tuesday afternoon that his office "filed the case with the Supreme Court on Sunday but the court has yet to register the case." On Monday, a lawmaker from MDP confirmed the party had gathered enough signatures to file an impeachment motion. But the party has not yet submitted it.

Pro-China Muizzu, 45, defeated India-friendly incum-

ment Ibrahim Mohamed Solih in the presidential runoff held in September last year. On January 24, calling India the "most long-standing ally," the MDP and the Democrats expressed concern about the Muizzu government's "anti-India stance."

The Maldives' proximity to India, barely 70 nautical miles from the island of Minicoy in Lakshadweep and 300 nautical miles from the mainland's western coast, and its location at the hub of commercial sea lanes running through the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) gives it significant strategic importance.

## MDP QUESTIONS REINSTATEMENT OF 3 MINS

A day after Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu re-appointed three members of

his cabinet, who were denied approval during a vote in Parliament, the main opposition party on Tuesday said it is looking into the legality of his move.

Led by the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), which has the highest number of members, the Maldivian Parliament on Monday voted to deny approval to Housing Minister Ali Haidar Ahmed, Islamic Minister Mohamed Shaheem Ali Saeed and Attorney General Ahmed Usham, while Economic Minister Mohamed Saeed narrowly survived the same fate. However, by evening, President Muizzu had reinstated all of them.

Ali Niyaz, a top MDP official, told Sun.mv that the reappointment of the three ministers was open to a huge legal

debate. "We (the MDP party) are therefore seeking legal counsel to determine whether the president is authorised to make such a decision and also to decide the MDP's next move. "Our stand is clear. They do not have our approval. This stand hasn't changed," Niyaz was saying.

The Maldivian Parliament has a total of 80 members. The Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has 45, followed by its ally The Democrats (DEM) with 13 members. Of the ruling coalition of PPM-PNC, the Progressive Party of the Maldives has 2 while the People's National Congress has 13 members.

There are three independents while the Jumhooree Party and the Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) have two each.

## HK begins work on its own National Security Law

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong began public consultation on a local National Security Law on Tuesday, more than three years after Beijing imposed a similar law that has all but wiped out dissent in the semi-autonomous city. The new law could expand the government's ability to prosecute residents for offenses like collaborating with foreign forces to influence legislation or "publish misleading statements", and to close down civil society organisations.

Some of its provisions threaten criminal prosecutions for acts committed anywhere in the world.

Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Basic Law, calls for the city to enact a national security law, but it's been delayed for decades because of widespread public opposition based on fears it would erode civil liberties. In 2003, an attempt to pass a version of the law sparked street protests that drew half a million people, and the legislation was shelved.

But the city's crackdown on political opposition likely clears the way for the bill to pass easily. Since 2020, many of the city's leading pro-democracy activists have been arrested, silenced or

forced into exile. Dozens of civil society groups have been disbanded, and outspoken media outlets like Apple Daily and Stand News have been shut down.

The draft text will be written later based on input from public consultation, which will begin Tuesday and will end on February 28. But the city released a 110-page document Tuesday outlining its plans for the legislation.

City leader John Lee called the legislation a "constitutional responsibility".

"We shouldn't wait any longer," he said during a news conference. "The threats to national security, they are real. We have experienced all these threats. We have suffered from them badly." Both the Hong Kong and Beijing governments have hailed the previous National Security Law for restoring stability after the massive pro-democracy protests in 2019.

Lee said a local version is still necessary to keep Hong Kong safe against "potential sabotage" and "undercurrents that try to create troubles", in particular surviving ideas about Hong Kong independence. Lee also said that some foreign agents may still be active in

Hong Kong. He said other countries, including the UK, UK, and Singapore, have similar laws to safeguard security and Hong Kong would draw from them.

Critics worry authorities will use a domestic national security law as another tool to crack down on dissidents, further eroding freedoms that were promised to the former British colony when it returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

The Beijing-imposed security law criminalised subversion, advocating secession, and collusion with foreign forces to intervene in the city's affairs as well as terrorism, but did not cover all the offenses authorities wanted to target.

Eric Lai, a research fellow at the Georgetown Centre for Asian Law, said that the one-month public consultation was shorter than the three months typical for important laws, saying it appeared to be "window dressing".

Highlights of the package include a ban on "threatening national security by collaborating with external forces to interfere in the affairs of our country or the HKSAR through improper means".

The document also suggested that colluding with an "external force" to publish a mis-

leading statement with the intent of endangering national security could be considered an espionage offence.

It also bans inciting public officials to abandon the Basic Law or their allegiance to Hong Kong and China, expanding an existing law that only covered members of the police and other security forces. Lee promised that people could still criticise the Hong Kong government and express opinions, as long as they do not intend to endanger national security. The government has already muzzled most dissent using existing laws. Hundreds of people have been arrested under the 2020 law.

Some 47 people were charged under the 2020 law for participating in an unofficial primary election, and two were convicted during the same time under an older sedition law for clapping in court and insulting a judge during a trial.

Lee said that the law will not provide for suspects to be transferred to mainland China for trial, unlike the 2020 law.

Security chief Chris Tang said the legislation would cover the use of computers and electronic systems to endanger national security, as well as disclosing state secrets and espionage, treason and sedition.

The proposal includes an expanded definition of state secrets that covers the "economic and social development of Hong Kong," as well as defense and diplomatic activities. The leader of the city's largest pro-democracy party called for clarification about how the law will define state secrets. Democratic Party Chairman Lo Kin-hei asked if journalists could be liable when reporting on inside information from the government in the public interest.

The proposal also seeks to revise and update several existing laws covering treason, theft of state secrets and espionage. Parts of the proposed law are to be applied beyond Hong Kong's borders. The government suggested it may use the new law to cancel the passports of fugitives overseas, citing a similar US law. Such laws could affect the many activists who went into exile fearing arrest. The Hong Kong police have offered bounties of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (USD 128,000) on at least 13 activists abroad, including former lawmakers Nathan Law and Ted Hui, who they accuse of colluding with external forces to impose sanctions on Hong Kong and China.

## 5 terrorists killed as Pak security officials thwart attack on Mach jail

AP ■ KARACHI

At least five terrorists of a banned group were killed when Pakistani security forces thwarted at least three coordinated attacks with rockets and sophisticated weapons by militants on a high-security jail in the country's restive Balochistan province, authorities said on Tuesday. A senior police official said at least 15 rockets were fired at the Central Mach Jail on Monday night where some dangerous militants and death row prisoners have been incarcerated. Balochistan's caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai said the Pakistan Army and Frontier Constabulary Balochistan acted swiftly to thwart the attacks during the night. "Five militants of the Balochistan Liberation Army were killed by security forces during the attack," he said. "They fired rockets at the Mach jail building but couldn't hit the target," he added.

Unconfirmed reports said at least two policemen were killed while a truck driver was injured in the attack but there was no official confirmation of casualties or injuries. The rockets

were fired from nearby mountains and exploded in different areas of Mach town.

After firing rockets, terrorists attacked a camp of the security forces near the central jail and also entered the Mach railway station.

Announcements were then made from loudspeakers for the people to remain indoors as the firing continued, the official said.

The Inspector General Prisons in Balochistan, Shuja Kasi, confirmed that rockets hit the walls of the residential colony of the Mach jail. "Mortar shells and rockets exploded close to the walls of the colony," he said, adding that no casualty was reported so far.

He said at present 800 prisoners were kept in Mach jail, including some death-row prisoners.

The minister claimed the terrorists were affiliated with the Aslam Acho group, with the Majeed Brigade of the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) group later claiming responsibility for the attack. One security official said the gun battle between the heavily armed terrorists and forces had lasted

for a couple of hours before they fled into the surrounding mountains before daylight broke.

He said no damage was reported to any of the installations. The attack was an apparent retaliation for Pakistani strikes on what the country said were insurgent hideouts in Iran earlier in January.

The BLA threatened to launch attacks on security forces in Balochistan and elsewhere following Pakistan's January 18 strikes on their camps in Iran that left at least nine persons dead.

The strikes were made in response to an Iranian strike in Pakistan that appeared to target a different Baloch militant group with similar separatist goals.

Pakistan's Balochistan province, as well as Iran's neighbouring Sistan-Baluchistan province, have faced a low-level insurgency by Baloch nationalists for more than two decades. Although the government says it has quelled the insurgency, violence in the province has persisted.

Iran and Pakistan share a 900-kilometer, largely lawless, border, across which smugglers and militants freely roam.

## Ukraine's strikes on targets inside Russia expose Putin's claims

AP ■ MOSCOW

The wail of air raid sirens is commonplace in Belgorod, a Russian border city whose residents are on edge following a Ukrainian missile attack on a New Year's holiday weekend that left dozens of people dead and injured. A spectacular explosion rocked a huge fuel export terminal on the Baltic Sea southwest of St. Petersburg this month from a Ukrainian drone, forcing the energy company Novatek to suspend operations for several days.

Last week, an apparent drone attack in the Black Sea port of Tuapse in the southern Krasnodar region hit one of Russia's largest refineries and ignited a fire, while another big refinery in the Volga River city of Yaroslavl, north of Moscow came under attack early Monday, but officials said there was no damage. There also have been strikes on a gun-

powder factory in the Tambov region and arms producers and military facilities in the Bryansk, Smolensk and Tula regions. Attacks like these are dealing a heavy blow to President Vladimir Putin's attempts to reassure Russians that life in the country is largely untouched by the nearly 2-year-old war. "Ukraine has increased its capacity to strike back against Russia," Michael Kofman, a military expert with the Carnegie Endowment, said in a recent podcast.

"You see increased Ukrainian attacks against Russian critical infrastructure, retaliatory attacks against cities like Belgorod and greater strikes against Russian military bases in Crimea," he said.

As Putin ramps up his campaign ahead of the presidential election in March, he wants to maintain an air of normalcy. But the increasingly frequent Ukrainian attacks

have raised the visibility of the war on Russian soil, and there are other signs the conflict is increasingly challenging the Kremlin's tight control of the political scene. Thousands across Russia have signed petitions supporting the longshot presidential bid of liberal politician Boris Nadezhdin, who has made ending the war his main campaign issue. Wives of some soldiers rounded up in a partial mobilization in 2022 have pushed for their discharge. And despite a tight ban on protests, hundreds rallied in Bashkortostan province, clashing with police to protest the jailing of a local activist.

Certainly the December 30 strike on Belgorod marked a bloody escalation in the minds of many Russians. A barrage of missiles struck the city of 340,000, which is about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of the Ukrainian border, on a holiday weekend when people

were out shopping, ice skating and watching New Year's festivities. Officials said 25 people were killed, including five children, and over 100 were injured.

Residents described seeing victims with horrific injuries and pools of blood staining the sidewalks. One resident told the RBC news outlet he saw a baby carriage hit by shrapnel, the bloodied parents lying next to it. A drug store clerk said injured pedestrians ran into his pharmacy, seeking help.

"I'm seeing requests on social networks from people who write: We are scared, please help us get to a safe place!" said regional Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov, adding that several hundred people were evacuated, including over 1,000 children heading to camps in neighbouring regions. Holiday and religious festivities were muted or cancelled entirely.

## EU moves toward using profits from frozen Russian assets to help Ukraine

AP ■ BRUSSELS

European Union nations have decided to approve an outline deal that would keep in reserve the profits from hundreds of billions of dollars in Russian central bank assets that have been frozen in retaliation for Moscow's war in Ukraine, an EU official said. The tentative agreement, reached late on Monday, still needs formal approval but is seen as a first step toward using some of the 200 billion euros (USD 216 billion) in Russian central bank assets in the EU to help Ukraine rebuild from Russian destruction.

The official, who asked not to be identified since the agreement was not yet legally ratified, said the bloc "would allow to start collecting the extraordinary revenues generated from the frozen assets ...

to support the reconstruction of Ukraine." How the proceeds will be used will be decided later, as the issue remains mired in legal and practical considerations.

There is urgency since Ukraine is struggling to make ends meet, and aid plans in the EU and the United States are being held back over political considerations including whether allies will continue helping Ukraine at the same pace as they did in the first two years of the war.

EU leaders will meet on Thursday hoping to approve a 50-billion-euro (USD 54 billion) support package for Ukraine over the solitary opposition of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Even if using the unfrozen assets, which now go untapped, seems like a practical step to take, many fear that

financial weaponisation could harm the standing of the EU in global financial markets.

Early this month, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called for a "strong" decision this year for the frozen assets in Western banks to "be directed towards defence against the Russian war and for reconstruction" of Ukraine.

The EU step late Monday paves the way if EU nations ever want to impose such measures. Group of Seven allies of Ukraine are still looking for an adequate legal framework to pursue the plan.

The US announced at the start of Russia's invasion that America and its allies had blocked access to more than USD 600 billion that Russia held outside its borders — including roughly USD 300 billion in funds belonging to

Russia's central bank.

Since then, the US and its allies have continued to impose rounds of targeted sanctions against companies and wealthy elites with ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The World Bank's latest damage assessment of Ukraine, released in March 2023, estimates that costs for the nation's reconstruction and recovery will be USD 411 billion over the next 10 years, which includes needs for public and private funds.

Belgium, which holds the rotating presidency of the European Union for the next six months, is now leading the talks on whether to seize Russia's assets.

Belgium is also the country where most frozen Russian assets under sanctions are being held.

## Indonesian police arrest 3 Mexicans after tourist hurt in armed robbery

**Denpasar (Indonesia) (AP):** Indonesian police said on Tuesday they have arrested three Mexicans for alleged robbery on the resort island of Bali that left a tourist from Turkiye badly wounded. The arrests were made Saturday at a villa in Ungasan village of Badung district in Bali where the Mexican men had been staying since December 7 as tourists, Bali Police spokesperson Jansen Avitus Panjaitan said.

The three men who were arrested and a fourth Mexican man broke into a villa near the popular tourist spot of Kuta last week after pointing their guns at a security guard and forcing him to surrender, Panjaitan said. The four men armed with

three guns sprayed bullets toward several guests who ran out of the villa for safety. The suspects stole US dollars and Indonesian currency worth about USD 5,900 from the villa, and shot a 39-year-old Turkish man in his stomach, left hand and left back chest, police said.

The suspects planned the robbery by preparing guns and surveilling the targeted villa, police said.

Surveillance camera recordings and witness accounts led police to the four Mexican suspects, one who was still being sought and three who were paraded at the news conference wearing handcuffs and orange vests.



Supporters of Sri Lanka's main opposition shout slogans as police fire water cannons to disperse them during a protest rally against high taxes and increases in electricity and fuel charges, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday.

AP/PTI

## ChatGPT violated European privacy laws, Italy tells OpenAI

AP ■ ITALY

Italian regulators said they told OpenAI that its ChatGPT artificial intelligence chatbot has violated European Union's stringent data privacy rules. The country's data protection authority, known as Garante, said on Monday that it notified San Francisco-based OpenAI of breaches of the EU rules, known as General Data Protection Regulation. The watchdog started investigating ChatGPT last year, when it temporarily banned within Italy the chatbot that can produce text, images and sound in response to users' questions.

Based on the results of its "fact-finding activity," the watchdog said it "concluded that the available evidence pointed to the existence of breaches of the pro-

visions" in the EU privacy rules. OpenAI has 30 days to reply to the allegations.

It didn't respond immediately to a request for comment. The company said last year that it fulfilled a raft of conditions that the Garante demanded to get the ChatGPT ban lifted.

The watchdog had imposed the ban after finding that some users' messages and payment information were exposed and because ChatGPT didn't have a system to verify users' ages, allowing children to get answers from the AI tool that were inappropriate for their age. It also questioned whether there was a legal basis for OpenAI to collect massive amounts of data used to train ChatGPT's algorithms and raised concerns that the system could sometimes

generate false information about individuals.

The growing popularity of generative AI systems like ChatGPT are also drawing increasing scrutiny from regulators on both sides of the Atlantic.

The US Federal Trade Commission opened an inquiry last week into the relationships between AI startups OpenAI and Anthropic and the tech giants that have bankrolled them — Amazon, Google and Microsoft. Competition regulators in the 27-nation EU and Britain, meanwhile, are also examining Microsoft's OpenAI investments. AI systems also face broader oversight in the EU, which is finalising its groundbreaking AI Act, the world's first comprehensive rulebook for artificial intelligence.





# FOOTLOOSE IN THE ENCHANTING KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

*From being the pearl capital of the world to a land of cultural wonders, breathtaking landscapes, and heart-pounding adventures, the island nation of Bahrain is one of the most popular and tourist-friendly countries in the Middle East. Explore the best of Bahrain with NIVI SHRIVASTAVA*

Nestled in the heart of the Middle East, the Kingdom of Bahrain stands as a jewel awaiting discovery by discerning travellers and luxury seekers. Blessed with a geographical location unlike any other in the region, this nation seamlessly blends natural wonders, opulent hospitality, vibrant shopping streets, and captivating landscapes. Brimming with rich Arabic culture, the Islamic kingdom gets the name from an Arabic term “al-Bahrayn,” which translates to “the two seas.” The blend of the two seas is a symbol of the Arabian Gulf and the freshwater springs that run beneath the sea, hinting at the unusual blend of saline and sweet waters surrounding the archipelago.

My journey in Bahrain starts at the iconic Al Fateh Grand Mosque, a masterpiece of Islamic architecture that serves as a testament to the country’s heritage. An usher at the entrance informs us to cover our heads with a traditional scarf and lends us a beautiful abaya (women’s robe) as a sign of respect inside the holy mosque. As I stepped into the colossal prayer hall adorned with intricate calligraphy and mesmerizing chandeliers, a sense of serenity and bewilderment captured my attention. The mosque, with its stunning blend of modernity and tradition, is located in the heart of the capital city, Manama. Constructed in 1987, the Al Fateh Grand Mosque is named after Ahmed Al Fateh, the founder of Bahrain, and can accommodate over 7,000 worshippers.

## PEARL OF THE GULF

Thanks to the distinctive blend of geothermal springs and sea water, natural Bahraini pearls (locally known as dana) are famous for their superior quality. Renowned for its ethical pearl harvesting and fair trade practices by preserving the centuries-old industry, the exceptional brilliance of Bahraini pearls has been a constant throughout the ages, gaining international acclaim for their unparalleled brilliance, purity, and beauty. Our local guide Eman Ali informed us about the ancient connection of Bahrain with the Indian sub-continent. The historic nation was once the seat of the ancient Dilmun civilization from the late fourth millennium to 800 BC, and over the years it has etched its place in history as the epicenter of pearling, boasting a legacy that spans over 4,000 years. The artistry of pearl diving is still carefully preserved at the Bahrain Pearling Trail in the historic district of Muharraq, where you can find the best of glistening pearls that once adorned the crowns of kings and queens.

## AN EXOTIC SEASCAPE

To experience the famous blend of seas first-hand, we decide to explore the exotic islands of Jarada with a super-modern motor boat. On a bright sunny day, we cruise along the coastline, reveling in the luxury of the sleek vessel cutting through the gentle waves to reach the secluded paradise. Here we are ready to snorkel in the pristine waters and swim with the vibrant underwater marine life. Schools of colorful fish dance around coral formations, creating a mesmerizing spectacle beneath the surface and we pick up the famous oysters to try our luck in finding the Bahraini pearls. Although, we weren’t lucky enough to



find the precious pearls, the fresh catch of the day was served to us for lunch along with some delicious grilled food that our local chefs prepared on the island. For a nature enthusiast like me, the pristine beaches of Jarada Bahrain Island were the most unexpected exotic sight in the Gulf. The azure waters, soft sands, and vibrant sunsets are just perfect to indulge in a leisurely afternoon basking in the sun or go for an adventurous dive in the idyllic retreat.

## THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

Revvng up the tempo, I couldn’t have missed visiting the Bahrain International Circuit - home to the adrenaline-pumping Formula 1

Grand Prix. A momentous addition to my Bahrain odyssey was experiencing the roar of engines, the screech of tires, and the pulsating energy of the racing tracks. For those craving a taste of speed, the go-karting experience at the adjoining race circuit provides an exhilarating opportunity to channel their inner racer. Eager to try this one-of-a-kind activity, I went ahead with the go-karting race and donned professional racing gear for a pulsating driving experience. The moment I gripped the steering wheel of the sleek go-kart, I was transported into a world of speed and precision. As I stepped onto the track, the distinctive roar of engines reverberated around me, creating an atmosphere charged with excitement. With every twist and turn, I navigated

the circuit feeling the rush of wind against my face and the roaring sound of the engine pumping up my adrenaline levels. Whether it was the sharp corners that demanded finesse or the straight stretches that begged for full throttle, each lap was worth every dime. The thrill of go-karting at this iconic venue was an experience to remember, and the track’s layout, designed to challenge even the most seasoned drivers added an element of strategy and accomplishment. The Bahrain International Circuit’s commitment to delivering a world-class motorsports experience was evident in every detail, from the well-maintained track to the state-of-the-art facilities that surrounded it. As I crossed the finish line, the elation of the experience lingered, leaving me with a newfound appreciation for the artistry of motorsports and it most definitely added a thrilling glimpse into the world of professional racing.

## A BLEND OF NEW AND OLD

Delving into Bahrain’s storied past, a visit to the Bahrain Fort offered me a fascinating glimpse into the Dilmun civilization. In the carefully restored ancient ruins, with their labyrinthine passages and towering walls, one can still hear the whispering tales of a bygone era. As the sun set over the Arabian Gulf, the massive fort provided a captivating backdrop for contemplating the rich history of this island nation.

As we left the past behind and entered the vibrant shopping streets of Bahrain, the mood changed instantly. No visit to Bahrain would be complete without indulging in its luxurious markets and upscale malls. The Manama Souq, a bustling labyrinth of narrow alleys, enticed me with its aromatic spices, vibrant fabrics, and intricate handicrafts. Meanwhile, the city’s modern malls, such as City Centre Bahrain and The Avenues, showcased a dazzling array of international brands, culinary delights, and entertainment options, offering a taste of Bahrain’s cosmopolitan allure.



# HURT F1 DREAM ENDED SO QUICKLY: Nyck

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hurt that his dream of racing in Formula 1 ended "prematurely", Dutch racer Nyck de Vries is busy charting the next chapter of his life as the former champion returns to the Formula E series buzzing with positive energy. The 28-year-old was axed by F1 team AlphaTauri after just 10 races as he failed to score points in his rookie F1 season last year. "Of course it hurts in a way to end your dream so quickly and prematurely but I have been able to reflect on it well," De Vries told PTI. De Vries had entered F1 on the back of championship-winning stints in F2 and Formula

E and a long-time F1 reserve role, which meant there was more pressure on him to perform compared to other rookies. "There was always pressure and I don't think I was necessarily in an easy situation and it didn't quite work out for various reasons. But pressure is relative, everyone experiences it. I'm thankful for the opportunities." "I see life as a journey, it was a chapter in my journey and now I continue my journey elsewhere. When a door closes it always opens a new one," he added. After the F1 snub, the Dutch racer has returned to the familiar all-electric Formula E series, signing up with India's Mahindra Racing.

"The transition (from F1 to FE) happened really quick. Quite shortly when it happened I travelled to London for the final round of the championship last year to be back in the paddock, in the environment, to see if there was a spot available for me this season. "Even though I took a bit of time out I also quickly focussed on building my program for this year. I'm very happy to be back in Formula E. I had a good break, good time off and now I'm full of positive energy," he added. Though he won the 2021 Formula E world championship, De Vries still has a lot to catch up on as the series has moved on from the Gen 2 to Gen 3 cars. "It was almost like 14-15



months ago that I last drove the Formula E car and that was a Gen 2, I had a couple of brief experiences in a Gen 3 car but a lot has developed since then," he said. De Vries finished 15th in the season-opening Mexico City race and also in the Diriyah E-Prix. Given Mahindra's struggle with reliability and efficiency with the Gen3 car, he has realistic expectations from this season. "It's about managing expectations. If people expect us to dominate this year they are dreaming. We collectively know where the team was at the end of last year. "The hardware didn't really change, that doesn't mean we can't make a lot of progress and improvements but we have to

be realistic," he said. "It's more about building process in the moment collectively and getting ready for building a solid structure for the near future when things do change and we start to fight in front," he added. Much to the disappointment of the Indian fans, the second edition of Hyderabad E Prix was scheduled to be held on February 10 was cancelled by Formula E due to an alleged breach of contract by the new Telangana government. "India is a big part of our (Mahindra) DNA. I would have been happy to meet our colleagues in India and hopefully make them proud in their home country. It wasn't meant to be this year but hopefully in the future we will get to do it."

## Avani eyes one more shot

PTI ■ PATTAYA (THAILAND)

India's Avani Prashanth is looking forward to a packed calendar over the next few weeks as she criss-crosses across the continent in search of golf glory at one of the world's best amateur events. The 17-year-old Bengaluru golfer, who started 2024 with two weeks in Australia while getting close to winning at one occasion, is now all set to tee off at the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific (WAAP) golf. Avani will make her fourth appearance at this event which carries extra significance, since the winner gets to seal a berth in three of the five women's Majors. On her part, Avani feels this event owes her one good finish before she moves on in her career. Avani was also thrilled for receiving a special invite to the Augusta National Women Amateur championships, which is held a week before the storied Masters at the Augusta National. Immediately after the 2024 WAAP, Avani will be off for the Kenya Ladies Open on the Ladies European Tour, where in she finished in the top 10 last year. The next on her schedule is another well-known amateur event, the Sage Valley Invitational. She started 2024 with a runner-up finish at the Australian Masters of Amateurs and missed a top 10 by a whisker at the Australian Amateur Championships. The focus for Avani and her five teammates, who have been fielded by the Indian Golf Union, is the WAAP.



Her teammates are Vidhatri Urs, Mannat Brar, Keerthana Rajeev Nair, Saanvi Somu and Heena Kang. They will tee off at the Siam Country Club. The team is accompanied by former national champion Vandana Agarwal. The top stars this week will include world No 4 Minsol Kim of Korea, Japan's Hinano Muguruma (22nd), Sayaka Teraoka (23rd), Mamika Shinchi (33rd), Rin Yoshida (38th) and defending champion from Thailand Eila Galitsky (40th). India's Avani is 42nd and Rianne Malixi from the Philippines is 43rd. While this is the fourth appearance at WAAP for Avani, it is the second time for Vidhatri and Mannat. The other three, Keerthana Rajeev Nair, Saanvi Somu and Heena Kang are making their debut at WAAP. Interestingly, Ceerat Kang's sister Heena played at the WAAP in 2022 at the same course.

Vidhatri's cousin Pranavi Urs, now a pro on the LET, has also played at the WAAP in the past. Avani, coming off her nine-hole practice round just before the rains arrived, said, "Somehow I have not managed to finish better than T-16." Avani won the 2023 Queen Sirikit Individuals besides picking a title on a women's pro event in Europe. She has multiple top 10s on Ladies European Tour events. "Many of these girls I have been playing with over the years are here. We are all close to finishing with our amateur careers. It is great to be here once again," she said. "I have known Eila (Galitsky) since we were about nine. We played together in US Kids Golf, then at various other events. Now we will be playing at Sage Valley and ANWA together. We have also roomed together, and stay in touch," Avani added. "I also know others like Rianne

(Malixi), Minsol and many others. So it is great to see everyone here. It's a great event and I really want to do well, maybe win it once, before I turn pro," she said. **PRIZES AND FIELD:** The prizes are considered as the very best in amateur golf for women. The winner gets starts at three major championships in 2024 — Women's Open, the Evian Championship and Chevron Championship. In addition, the winner will get invitations to play in the 121st Women's Amateur Championship, Augusta National Women's Amateur Championship, the Hana Financial Group Championship and the Women's Australian Open. The field is made up of 90 players from 22 countries and only those in the World Amateur Golf Ranking (WAGR) list are eligible to play. The leading 50 players (plus ties) progress past the 36-hole cut and play the final two rounds.

## Sneha, Hitaashee prepare for another battle in 3rd leg

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Sneha Singh and Hitaashee Bakshi, who had finished in the top two in both the two earlier legs in the ongoing Women's Pro Golf Tour season, will be back for another shot at the third event which begins at Tollygunge Club here Wednesday. Sneha and Hitaashee were tied for second when amateur Nishna Patel won the opening leg. In the second leg, Sneha edged out Hitaashee, who finished runner-up. Sneha, winner of the 2023 Hero Order of Merit, has taken the early lead once again, with Hitaashee chasing her. It has been a good start for Hitaashee, who was injured last year. Besides finishing second in the opening two legs, she won the Thailand Tour's LPGA Qualifying Tour, granting her access to pro tournaments in



Thailand. Amandeep Drall, Ridhima Dilawari and Seher Atwal will be among the other leading contenders in the third leg. Some of the other leading stars of Hero WPGT are going to South Africa for the Sunshine Ladies Tour starting next month, including Vani Kapoor, Tvesa Malik and Neha Tripathi. Besides, a few others like Amandeep and Seher will also be joining them for some events. An interesting feature of both the events held so far this season has been that at least the top three finishers have totalled under-par scores, underlining the tremendous improvement in the quality of women's golf in India. A total of 29 girls will tee off in the third leg, and the field includes two amateurs — Anaahat Bindra and Sinjini Mukherjee.

## India lose to Netherlands in quarterfinals

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Mohammed Raheel's hat-trick went in vain as India suffered a 4-7 defeat to the Netherlands in the quarterfinals of the FIH Hockey5s Men's World Cup here on Tuesday. Apart from Raheel (1; 7; 25'), Mandeep Mor (11') scored for India. For the Netherlands, Sander de Wijn (4; 15'), and Alexander Schop (10; 26') scored a brace each, while Lucas Middendorp (12'), Jamie van Aart (13'), and Pepijn Reyenga (20') also found the net. The match started on a promising for India as Raheel showcased his skills with a remarkable field goal in the very first minute, setting the tone for an intense competition. However, the Netherlands swiftly responded to India's early lead, with de Wijn (4') lev-



elling the score. Undeterred by the quick equaliser, India intensified their offensive strategies, leading to another goal by

Raheel. Despite the renewed lead, the Netherlands, demonstrating resilience, managed to equalise

once again, courtesy of a goal by Schop. The back-and-forth nature of the match continued, with Mandeep reclaiming the lead for India. Nevertheless, the Netherlands countered with a rapid succession of goals, as Middendorp and van Aart skilfully found the back of the net, swinging the momentum in favour of the Netherlands. Heading into half time, de Wijn delivered a crucial challenge goal, leaving India behind. The second half witnessed the Netherlands asserting their dominance, as Reyenga and Schop extended their lead. Despite a valiant effort by Raheel, who scored again to complete his hat-trick, India fell short. India will next play against Kenya in the 5-8th place match later in the day.

## Divya alleges sexism by spectators at Tata Steel Masters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian chess player Divya Deshmukh has alleged that she endured sexist behaviour from spectators at the recently-concluded Tata Steel Masters in Wijk Aan Zee, Netherlands, saying they "focussed on irrelevant things like her hair, clothes and accent" during the tournament. The 18-year-old International Master from Nagpur, who won the Asian women's chess championship last year, shared a lengthy social media post calling out the misogyny that women players face routinely while elaborating on her unpleasant experience in Wijk Aan Zee. "I have been wanting to address this for a while but was waiting for my tournament to be over. I got told and also myself noticed how women in

chess are often just taken for granted by spectators," Deshmukh said. "Most recent example of this on a personal level would be in this tournament, I played a few games which I felt were quite good and I was proud of them. "I got told by people how the audience was not even bothered with the game but instead focused on every single possible thing in the world: my clothes, hair, accent and every other irrelevant thing," she wrote in an Instagram post on Sunday. Deshmukh finished 12th in the Challengers section with a score of 4.5 at the Tata Steel Masters. The teenager said while male players were getting their share of spotlight purely for their game, the women were judged for aspects which had nothing to do with their ability on the chess board.



"I was quite upset to hear this and I think is the sad truth that people when women play chess they often overlook how good they actually are, the games they play and their strength," she said. "I was quite disappointed to see how

everything was discussed about in my interviews (by the audience) except my games, very few people paid attention to it and it is quite a sad thing. "I felt it was unfair in a way because

if I go to any guy's interview there would be way less judgement on a personal level, actual compliments about the game and the player," she asserted. Despite the progress made in women's sports in terms of pay scale, female athletes are still subjected to sexist behaviour and are often asked about their outfits. Deshmukh said women players are under-appreciated in general and often endure hatred. "...Every irrelevant thing is focused on and hated on while guys would probably get away with the same things. I think women face this on a daily basis and I'm barely 18. "I have faced so much judgement including hatred over the years for things that don't even matter. I think women should start getting equal respect," she added.

## Bhutia demands resignation of AIFF president Chaubey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former captain Bhaichung Bhutia on Tuesday demanded the resignation of All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey, holding him responsible for the "current mess" in the administrative side of the game in the country, following the dismissal of Shaji Parabhakaran as secretary general. Bhutia attended Tuesday's executive committee meeting of the AIFF called here to discuss the dismissal of Parabhakaran on November 7. Parabhakaran was not initially invited for the meeting but joined it virtually. "I told the executive committee members that Kalyan Chaubey and treasurer Kipa Ajay should also resign. Shaji Parabhakaran should not be made the only scapegoat. All three of them are equally

responsible for taking decisions without the approval of executive committee," Bhutia told PTI. "All three of them were taking the decisions and if Shaji has to be removed, the president and treasurer should also be removed," said the legendary striker. "Indian football is in mess, there is politics in the sport, cutting out each other after little over one year of taking charge, it is not good. The national team has been left in the lurch during the Hangzhou Asian Games as well as in the Asian Cup where there was inadequate training time for the team." Parabhakaran was removed as secretary general on November 7 for "breach of trust" but a single bench of the Delhi High Court had on December 8 ordered an interim stay on his



sacking. In its latest order of January 19, the High Court pointed out that Parabhakaran was dismissed by the emergency committee of the AIFF whereas the federation's constitution provides that only the executive committee has the power to do that. Another source confirmed

Bhutia's version and added that Parabhakaran asked the executive committee members to explain what constituted the "breach of trust." "He (Parabhakaran) asked the executive committee to explain what constituted breach of trust on the basis of which he was dismissed. He said he had not committed any financial

irregularities or fraud. He also said that there was no emergency committee constituted for the AIFF and how can there be a reference to the emergency committee for my dismissal," the source said. "Parabhakaran also said that he would have, in any case, resigned because his relationship with the president was nearing breaking point." AIFF vice president NA Haris then intervened and said that the matter is sub-judice. Bhutia, who lost in the AIFF presidential poll in 2022, also said that he did not know what constituted the "breach of trust" which led to Parabhakaran's dismissal. "I am an executive committee member but I don't know what was the breach of trust Shaji had committed. I am not told nor briefed about it." Bhutia said that he proposed

live streaming of the AIFF annual general or executive committee meetings for the sake of transparency. "Nowadays, even the Supreme Court and High Court case hearings are streamed live, so what is the problem in doing the same for AIFF AGM or executive committee meetings. So, I proposed live streaming of AIFF meetings." Talking about the Indian team's group stage exit in the AFC Asian Cup in Doha, Bhutia said, "Asian Games and Asian Cup are the two most important tournaments for India and both were disasters, not due to players or coach but because of the AIFF top brass. "In the Asian Games, the team played its first match just a few hours after landing in Hangzhou. In the Asian Cup, the team was not given adequate training time."



## Mumbai Open Tennis Championship to be held from February 5-11

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Players from 31 countries will take part in the Mumbai Open Tennis Championship to be held here from February 5 to 11 following a gap of six years. The tournament will be played at the newly-laid tennis courts at the Cricket Club of India (Brabourne Stadium), which is organising the event along with the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA). The third edition of the Mumbai Open will feature three top 100 players in the singles and six top 100 players in the doubles event, which is a part of the WTA USD 125K series. The qualifying matches will be played on February 3 and 4 whereas the main draw will start from February 5. Kayla Day of the US, who won the 2016 US Open girls singles and currently world No 82, will lead the 32-player field, along with Japan's Nao Hibino, who is the winner of three WTA

Tour singles titles. The former French Open semi-finalist Tamara Zidansek, ranked 97th, is the third player from top 100 in the singles. Ankita Raina is the only Indian confirmed in the singles main draw. India's top-ranked doubles player Prarthana Thombare and her Dutch partner Arianne Hartono have a direct entry into the doubles event. The wild cards for the tournament are expected to be announced soon. "The WTA Mumbai Open has attracted some big names and rising stars in the past, including two-time Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka, who won her first WTA USD125K title right here in Mumbai in 2017," said members of the organising committee Sanjay Khandare and Pravin Darade in a statement. Sabalenka had won the first edition of Mumbai Open in 2017 while Thailand's Luksika Kumkhum won the next in 2018.



# ROHIT IS PAST HIS PRIME: BOYCOTT



PTI ■ LONDON

Former England opener Geoffrey Boycott feels India skipper Rohit Sharma is “past his prime” and the hosts badly missed the peerless Virat Kohli in the series opener against England in Hyderabad. Despite enjoying a strong position after the first innings, India lost by 28 runs against England in the first Test to trail 0-1 in the five-match series. In the absence of Kohli, the onus was on Rohit to shoulder the responsibility in the batting department but he could only manage 24 and 39 in two innings as the Indian batting crumbled big time while chasing 231 on a fourth day pitch. And Boycott believes it is a golden chance for England to beat India in their own backyard after 12 years. “This India team are ripe for the taking and England have a golden chance to be the first side to topple them on their own patch for 12 years,” Boycott wrote in his column for “The Daily Telegraph”. “India badly miss Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja has a hamstring injury and will not

play the second Test. Their captain Rohit Sharma is nearly 37 and past his best. He makes pretty cameos but has scored only two Test hundreds at home in four years. They are also weak in the field. They droppeded Ollie Pope on 110 and that cost them 86 runs. It lost them the match.” The Indian spin trio of Ravichandran Ashwin, Jadeja and Axar Patel looked a pale shadow of themselves on a spin-friendly but not exactly dust-bowl of a Hyderabad wicket. The English batters came out with a perfect tactical ploy, using sweeps and reverse sweeps to great effect to counter the threat. “England bamboozled India with their sweeps and reverse sweeps and to lose after taking a 190-run lead will be mind-blowing for India. It has never happened to them before on their own pitches where they thought they were invincible,” Boycott wrote. India were dealt a big blow after the Hyderabad defeat as Jadeja and KL Rahul have been ruled out of the second Test starting in Visakhapatnam on February 2, due to injuries. While Jadeja sustained a

hamstring injury during play on Day 4 of the first Test, Rahul complained of pain in his right quadriceps. Because of the balance that he brings into the playing, Jadeja’s absence will be massive feels the legendary opener. “Jadeja is a huge blow. He is a great all-rounder, top bowler, brilliant fielder and was their best batsman in the first Test. Kohli is their talisman. He is a magnificent batsman who averages 60 on Indian pitches but he also gives them great energy in the field. He is a big loss and England must make the most of it before he comes


back for the third Test,” Boycott wrote. He believes that England have India on the mat and could well be hosts’ first series defeat in a dozen of years. “Once in a while a team are in the right place at the right time to clinch a big series win and England could be in that position right now in India.

India are due a (series) defeat at home, the signs are good as they have lost Kohli, Jadeja, Mohammed Shami and Rishabh Pant and are playing opponents full of confidence after a remarkable win. England must take this rare opportunity,” he further wrote.

सार्वजनिक सूचना

इस सूचना के माध्यम से हर आम व खास को सूचित किया जाता है। इस कार्यालय में गुजरात विजय, हरण गोपी, मोनिका निवास मकान नं. 504-1/4 मोडल टाउन करणल इलाहाबाद जिला के आईडी ईएनएल16 मोडल टाउन करणल में नाम दर्ज करने वाले आवेदन किया है। रिकार्ड अनुसार उपरोक्त सम्पत्ति कर आईडीईनो. ईएनएल16 में बिना नाम के दर्ज है, तथा एकल / वसतिगृह 70 आरती को मृत्यु दिनांक 30/7/22 को चुकी है। अतः यदि किसी आवेदन आवाहन को जल करीबन अनुसार सम्पत्ति कर आईडी ईनो ईएनएल16 निम्न सखन गुजरात विजय, हरण गोपी, मोनिका निवास मकान नं 504-1/4 मोडल टाउन करणल का नाम बदल कर लेने हेतु किसी प्रकार को अपाणि हो तो इस कार्यालय में नोटिस प्रकाशन को तिथि से 30 दिनों के अंदर अपनी आपत्ति / प्रताराज दर्ज करवा सकते हैं। अन्यथा उपरोक्त सम्पत्ति कर आईडी ईनो में नाम दर्ज / तबदील कर दिया जायेगा। इसके पश्चात कोई भी क्लेम मान्य नहीं होगा।

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**Public Consultation for Environment and Social Considerations for Delhi - Amritsar High Speed Rail Corridor (DC-AHSRC)**

NHSRCL is in process of conducting Detail Project Report (DPR) for the development of proposed High Speed Rail Corridor (HSRC) covering a stretch of approx. 474.772Kms from Delhi to Amritsar. As a part of it, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Social Impact Assessment (SIA) studies of the proposed corridor have been undertaken and a public consultation is being organized to seek inputs/suggestions from the stakeholders. Interested people of Jalandhar District in Environmental and Social consideration for the proposed DC-AHSRC are invited to participate in the public consultation meeting as proposed at given venue:-  
1.Venue:- DAC Meeting Hall, District- Jalandhar  
Date :16.02.2024  
Time : 11:00 AM

**NHSRCL, New Delhi**

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**APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]  
POSSESSION NOTICE  
(For immovable property)**

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 26.04.2023 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1. Diana Products Private Limited, 2. Diana Industries, 3. Essco Steels (India) (Prop. Nirmal Budhiraja), 4. Nirmal Budhiraja, 5. Seema Budhiraja, 6. Suhel Budhiraja, 7. Sukul Budhiraja, 8. Sunil Budhiraja to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.4,54,96,499.29/- (Rupees Four Crore Fifty Four Lac Ninety Six Thousand Four Hundred Ninety Nine and Twenty Nine Paise Only) as on 25.04.2023, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Demand notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub – section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 25th day of January 2024. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of THE IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs.4,54,96,499.29/- (Rupees Four Crore Fifty Four Lac Ninety Six Thousand Four Hundred Ninety Nine and Twenty Nine Paise Only) and interest thereon. The borrower’s attention is invited to provisions of sub – Section (8) Of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable properties.
Property-1: All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 15-R, Measuring 762 Sq. Yds. Out Of 1143 Sq. Yds, Situated At Industrial Area-B, Gill Road, Focal Point, Tehsil & District: Ludhiana, Punjab, 141001, And Bounded As: East:Portion 14, 2-132'-00", West: Piyush Enterprises 16, 12-134'-06", North: Road 50'-06", South: Others 53'-09", Property-2: All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 397-E, Phase-Vi, Measuring 1100 Sq. Yds., Situated At Focal Point, Tehsil & District: Ludhiana, Punjab, 141001, And Bounded As: East: Neighbour 70'-00", West: Road 70'-00", North: Vacant Plot 145'-00", South: Neighbour 145'-00"

**Authorised Officer**  
**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile IDFC FIRST Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)


## Injuries to Rahul, Jadeja cause major selection headache

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Untimely injuries to Ravindra Jadeja and K L Rahul have given a major selection headache to India as they seek to bounce back in the second Test against England, following a rare defeat at home. Both Jadeja and Rahul were among India’s main performers in the first innings of the Hyderabad Test before England turned the tables on the formidable hosts. Jadeja sustained a hamstring injury while going for a quick single during the Hyderabad Test while Rahul has complained of pain in his right quadriceps. The duo’s unavailability adds to the woes of the home side, which was clearly stunned by England’s ‘Bazball’ strategy. Jadeja, with his exceptional all-round abilities, makes himself almost irreplaceable and Rahul too has been among India’s standout batters across the ODI and Test format since returning from a surgery in September. Virat Kohli remains unavailable due to personal reasons and after a shock reverse in the series opener, the management will be missing him even more in Visakhapatnam where the second Test begins on Friday. Rohit Sharma and Rahul Dravid have enough options to choose from with selectors adding three players to the squad -- Sarfaraz Khan, Sourabh Kumar and Washington Sundar. A straightforward selection will be Rajat Patidar, who was also a part of the 15 in Hyderabad. He could take Rahul’s place in the



middle-order with Kuldeep Yadav replacing Jadeja as the third spinner alongside R Ashwin and Axar Patel. Another option for India is to do what England did in the opener, play only one pacer for four spin choices. In that case, Mohammed Siraj could make way for Kuldeep and the team can accommodate either Sarfaraz Khan or Washington to solidify the middle-order. Sourabh, who also bowls left-arm spin like Jadeja and is a decent batter with a couple of first-class hundreds to his name, can be a dark horse in that race. The ACA-VDCA Stadium in Visakhapatnam has staged two Tests till date and the pitch is usually a batting friendly one at least in the first innings. Batting first at the venue back in 2019, India had racked up 502 in the first innings against South Africa with Mayank Agarwal getting a double hundred and Rohit scoring a brisk 176 in his first innings as a Test opener. Spin legend Anil Kumble feels wrist spinner Kuldeep’s presence in the eleven will be helpful.



Govt. of Haryana



**“सिक्ख गुरु परंपरा केवल आस्था और अध्यात्म की परंपरा नहीं है। ये ‘एक भारत श्रेष्ठ भारत’ के विचार का भी प्रेरणापुंज है।”**  
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