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WELCOME TO THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

Nightmare in the skies

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Mid air scares targeting Indian airlines continued on Saturday, as at least 30 flights operated by Vistara, Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Star Air and Akasa Airlines were forced to make emergency landings after bomb threats, which later turned out to be hoaxes. So far this week, at least 70 flights of Indian carriers have received bomb threats, and all of them turned out to be hoaxes. The hoax threats comes right in the middle of festive season when a large number of Indians plan to fly. Worried over increasing trends of bomb threat messages, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has called the chief executive officers (CEOs) of the airlines for a meeting to discuss ways to tackle the issue, which is causing inconvenience to passengers and losses to carriers. According to officials, six flights against which bomb threats were made via social media made scheduled landings at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. These threats came from a single X account and were categorised as "hoax" and "non specific" after thorough checks, the official added. The account, of a user named 'Adha', mentioned flights of several airlines, though only six were scheduled to land at Mumbai

international airport, the official said. These were from Delhi, Goa and Darbhanga. Hoax bomb threats can wreak havoc on the Indian aviation sector since they are not easy to trace. Given the Khalistani threats to airlines, the government or airlines can't take such calls lightly even if they think these to be hoax calls. Notably, the spate of hoax bomb threats against Indian airlines has led to major financial repercussions, with airline officials estimating losses running into crores of rupees. According to Aviation Industry sources, the overall financial damage of the hoax, including costs for unscheduled landing, passenger accommodations, aircraft grounding, and crew replacements, is projected to exceed Rs 3 crore. Top sources said more than 30 flights, including domestic and international ones, operated by domestic airlines have received bomb threats through social media since Saturday morning. In at least one of the flights, a note was found in the lavatory saying there was a bomb in the flight. On Saturday, Vistara said five of its flights on international routes received security threats through social media while IndiGo said at least four of its flights got security-related alerts. The five flights of Vistara are UK106 (Singapore to Mumbai), UK027 (Mumbai



to Frankfurt), UK107 (Mumbai to Singapore), UK121 (Delhi to Bangkok) and UK131 (Mumbai to Colombo). "Following the protocol, all relevant authorities were promptly alerted and all security procedures are being adhered to, as per the guidance from the authorities and security agencies," an airline spokesperson said in a statement. Besides, there was a security concern regarding Vistara flight UK624 from Udaipur to Mumbai, and after landing, the aircraft was taken to an isolation bay for mandatory checks. A note was found in the lavatory of the aircraft saying there is a bomb in the flight, a source in the know said. IndiGo also issued statements for at least five international flights with respect to the threats - 6E 11, 6E 17, 6E 58, 6E 108, and 6E 184. They are 6E17

(Mumbai to Istanbul), 6E11 (Delhi to Istanbul), 6E184 (Jodhpur to Delhi) and 6E108 (Hyderabad to Chandigarh). The airline said it is cognisant of a situation involving flights from Mumbai and Delhi to Istanbul. Regarding the Jodhpur to Delhi flight, the carrier said the plane landed in the national capital and customers have disembarked the aircraft. About the Hyderabad to Chandigarh flight, IndiGo said that upon landing, the aircraft was isolated and all passengers were safely disembarked. Sources said that the plane was being checked at Chandigarh airport thoroughly by the airport authorities at the isolation bay. The Air India flight numbers AI 101, AI 105, AI 126, 119, and AI 161 were disrupted following the bomb scare.

Chaos on the roads

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The worsening traffic congestion across the city particularly at major junctions such as ITO, Moolchand, Chirag Delhi, Nehru Place, RTR has taken a toll on the city's road infrastructure which cater to both the Delhiites and floating population from the National Capital Region (NCR) regions like Noida, Gurgaon resulting in daily chaos. The Pioneer has already sustained a month long campaign on traffic congestion, solution and this time the Capital's new age destination across "Jamuna Paar" Anand Vihar has been carved out, to off load the in-traffic situation and has several commuters facilities like a Railway Station,

Interstate Bus Terminus (ISBT), Metro and Rapid Railway Transit System (RRTS) have come up. Due to heavy traffic congestion, it is now considered one of the busiest areas in Delhi since it lies on the border, close to the bustling metropolis of Ghaziabad and Noida and millions throng here each day. The Anand Vihar ISBT falls under the Madhu Vihar traffic circle. According to Delhi police, it has started a crackdown and issued 205 challans under different heads were also issued against the violators and encroachers. During a visit by senior police officers recently, it was observed that the road was

encroached by illegal vendors, and hawkers from both sides. They display articles on the pathways, clothes are hung on hangers and rings and illegally parked vehicles such as TSRs, Buses, Private Taxis add to the heavy traffic congestion, police said on Saturday. Due to this, the once wide road has been shortened from both the sides and pedestrians and commuters were not getting enough space to even walk on footpaths. Analysing the situation, the police evolved a strategy to clear IN/OUT congestion at the road of Anand Vihar ISBT and to make carriageway congestion free. A meeting was then arranged with the Deputy Commissioner, Municipal

Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Shahdara South Zone and local police and they were requested to arrange joint drives for removal of encroachment at Anand Vihar ISBT. A special drive was carried out along with MCD, to clear congestion and most of the encroachments were removed. Anand Vihar is a major transit hub connected with Railway, RRTS and Metro network and is always abuzz with lakhs of commuters using various modes of transport. It is surrounded by densely populated Indirapuram, Surajmal Vihar, Ramprastha in Ghaziabad, Noida, Dilshad Garden, Shahdara, Mayur Vihar, Patparganj. This leads to chaos and traffic congestion due to encroachers and heavy traffic volumes. It takes road commuters 15 to 20 minutes to cross the outside the ISBT on Chaudhary Charan Singh Marg. Buses, autorickshaws, e rickshaws and private vehicles are always stationed at wrong points leading to traffic jams. A large number of non destined vehicles entering Delhi from UP also added woes to the commuters. It is around 9 pm, when the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border at Anand Vihar becomes messy as the legal time to enter into the Capital for the commercial vehicles begins. Besides increasing parking fees, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena issued orders to regulate traffic / buses inside and outside the three ISBTs including Anand Vihar last month. Inside the ISBT, the situation has improved but outside, it remains the same.

BJP ready for Jharkhand

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ RANCHI / NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday released its list of 66 candidates for the Jharkhand Assembly elections, fielding party president Babul Marandi from Dhanwar, and former Chief Minister Champai Soren from Saraikela. The party named Sita Soren, the sister-in-law of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader and Chief Minister Hemant Soren, as its nominee from Jamtara. The list also has the names of Geeta Kora and former Union minister Sudarshan Bhagat. The BJP is contesting 68 of the 81 Assembly seats in the state, leaving the rest for its allies. Assembly polls will be held in two phases on November 13 and 20 and counting will take place on November 23. Champai Soren, who contested from Seraikela, joined the BJP on August 30, two days after he resigned from the JMM citing "insult" and dissatisfaction with the party's current style of functioning and facing "bitter humiliation". The joining of the 67-year-old leader in the BJP was seen as a significant boost for the party's efforts to strengthen its connection with the Scheduled Tribes, a strong support base of the JMM. Meanwhile, fissures surfaced among INDIA Bloc partners ahead of the Assembly elections as the Rashtriya Janata Dal



Babul Marandi, Champai Soren, Sita Soren, Geeta Kora, Sudarshan Bhagat

Remove acting DGP Anurag Gupta: ECI

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ahead of the Jharkhand polls, the Election Commission on Saturday directed the state government to remove Acting Director General of Police (DGP) Anurag Gupta from his post with immediate effect due to a "history" of complaints against him in previous elections, sources said. The Jharkhand Assembly elections will be held in two phases - November 13 and 20. The decision to remove Gupta was based on a history of

complaints and action taken by the Commission against him during previous elections, the sources said. As an interim, the charge of the DGP will now be handed over to the senior most DGP-level officer in the cadre, they said. The state government has also been asked to submit a panel of names of senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officers by October 21 morning to enable the EC to pick an officer to be named the next DGP. The state government has to submit a compliance report of these directions by Saturday evening.

During the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Gupta was relieved of his duties as ADG (Special Branch), Jharkhand, following allegations of biased conduct made by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM). He was reassigned to the resident commissioner's office in Delhi and barred from returning to Jharkhand until the election process was completed, the sources recalled. During the Rajya Sabha elections from Jharkhand in 2016, Gupta, then an additional DGP, faced serious charges of misuse of authority. The Commission had formed an inquiry committee following which a charge sheet was issued to him for departmental enquiry.



We will not give Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Setting the stage for the first round of showdown between the newly elected government in Jammu and Kashmir and the Union government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has approved the resolution passed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah-led Cabinet urging the Centre to restore the statehood to the Union territory. The Central leaders including PM Modi and the Union Home Minister Amit Shah had repeatedly announced and reiterated the commitment made on the floor of the Parliament that the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir would be restored at an appropriate time. According to the spokesperson of the Department of Information and Public Relations, J and K the Cabinet has authorised the Chief Minister to take up the matter with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Government of India for restoration of statehood. He said the CM will go to New Delhi in the coming days to meet the Prime Minister and Union Ministers in this regard. Meanwhile, the cabinet headed by Omar Abdullah has also decided to summon the Legislative Assembly at Srinagar on November 4 and advised the LG to summon and address the assembly, the spokesperson of the



Department of Information and Public Relations said in a written statement released on Saturday. The draft address of the Lt Gov to the Legislative Assembly at the commencement of the first session was also placed before the Council of Ministers which the Council decided shall be further considered and discussed, he said. "The Cabinet which met under the chairmanship of Omar Abdullah earlier on Thursday passed a unanimous resolution for restoration of statehood in its original form," an official spokesperson said. The spokesperson further added that the restoration of statehood will be the beginning of a healing process, reclaiming the constitutional rights and protecting the identity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Protection of Jammu and Kashmir's unique identity and constitutional rights of people remains the cornerstone of the newly-elected government's policy, the spokesperson said. However, the Omar Abdullah-led government faced criticism as Kashmir-based political parties described the resolution only on statehood and not on Article 370 as an "utter surrender" and a departure from the stand of the ruling National Conference. Various political parties, including the People's Democratic Party (PDP), People's Conference (PC) and Awami Ittehad Party (AIP), denounced the move, reminding the NC of its poll promise to "strive to restore (Articles) 370-35A and statehood as prior to August 5, 2019", and saying it was a departure from the pre-election stand.

Dancing drones will light up Ayodhya's night sky this Deepotsav

Lights mounted on 500 drones will showcase key episodes from the Ramayana

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government is all set to enhance the grandeur of Deepotsav in Ayodhya with a stunning aerial drone show. The event will feature a captivating display of 500 drones equipped with colourful lights, set to illuminate Ayodhya's night sky. The 15-minute show, a major highlight of the Deepotsav celebrations, will showcase the prowess of Made-in-India drones. Attendees can expect to witness a breathtaking presentation of the 'veer mudra' of Lord Ram, Laxman, and Hanuman, brought to life through a combination of laser

lights, voiceovers, and musical narration. The show will also include dynamic displays depicting key episodes from the Ramayana, such as Ravan Vadh, the Pushpak Viman, scenes from Deepotsav, Ram Darbar, Valmiki, Tulsidas, and the Ram Temple. "The mesmerising visuals promise to enthral the audience, with the logos of Deepotsav, the UP government, and the tourism department also projected onto the sky," the government spokesman said. This year's Deepotsav holds special significance as it marks the first celebration since the idol of Lord Ramlala was enshrined in the grand temple. To make this occasion unforgettable, meticulous



FILE PHOTO

preparations are underway to ensure the drone show meets international standards. A full rehearsal is scheduled for October 29, one day before the main event, to ensure flawless coordination and precise drone formations. The grand show will take place at the iconic Ram Ki Paidi. The drone show will feature 15 distinct formations in the sky. To execute this, a detailed storyboard with animations will be prepared and submitted to the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department for approval. Various elements such as concept development, screenplay, background music composition, voiceovers, narration, and laser light effects are being

meticulously crafted to support the aerial displays. In addition to the drone show, Ram Ki Paidi will host a laser light and sound presentation that highlights the inspiring moments from the life of Lord Shri Ram. While daily laser and sound shows are a regular attraction at Ram Ki Paidi, this special presentation during Deepotsav remains a centrepiece of the festivities. Complementing the drone spectacle, a sound and laser display featuring artistically crafted green firecrackers will further elevate the atmosphere, lighting up the skies above Ayodhya and the event venue, making this Deepotsav a memorable celebration for all.

Kejriwal's politics made city air, water poisonous: BJP leaders on Yamuna pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As Delhi grapples with arising air pollution and toxic foam has been visible on the Yamuna River, several BJP leaders reached Yamuna bank on Saturday and launched a blistering attack against the Aam Aadmi Party saying that it is the poisonous politics of Arvind Kejriwal that has made the water and air in the national capital poisonous. The BJP also sought details about how the government spent Rs 1,000 crores collected as pollution cess.

levels and the foam in the Yamuna over the past 48 hours have exposed the reality of the Kejriwal - Atishi, BJP said after union minister and East Delhi MP Harsh Malhotra visited Kalindi Kunj on Saturday and revealed the truth behind the thick white layer of foam floating on the Yamuna river. He remarked that the white foam on the water's surface is proof that, despite a decade of promises from Arvind Kejriwal and now Atishi, ground reality remains unchanged. Even when crores of rupees have been allocated by the central government for Yamuna's cleaning, the Kejriwal government has remained stuck in blame games, he said. BJP spokesperson and environmental expert Dr.



Anil Gupta, local councillor Brah Singh, and several other officials, along with local residents severely affected by the pollution, were present at the event.

Malhotra criticized the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), stating that since 2013, the party has repeatedly raised the issue of Yamuna pollution and promised to take a holy

dip in the river with citizens after cleaning it. However, the reality today is that standing by the river bank invites several health risks. He questioned the

government's accountability for the Rs 1,000 crores collected as pollution cess, intended to tackle pollution and clean the Yamuna. Neither the Kejriwal government nor Atishi's current administration has provided any details on the use of these funds, Malhotra claimed. He also criticized the AAP government for opposing serious Yamuna cleanup efforts. Malhotra accused AAP of endangering public health by misleading citizens. Despite promises, sewage treatment plants (STPs) have not been installed at 18 major drains and 32 smaller drains flowing into the Yamuna. "The funds provided by the central government were used only for advertisements and self-promotion," Malhotra

alleged. He further added, "The Kejriwal government's vision of a clean Delhi exists only on hoardings and posters. The reality is evident today as we stand at the banks of the Yamuna in Kalindi Kunj." BJP spokesperson Shahzad Poonawala also slammed the Kejriwal government saying, now they will blame Uttar Pradesh and Haryana governments. The question that arises is why has Delhi become a gas chamber today. "The reason behind poisonous water and air is poisonous politics. AAP indulges in polluted blame game politics. Earlier they used to blame stubble burning in Punjab for pollution in Delhi. But now Bhagwant Mann says he can't do anything about it.

What happened with biodecomposers? He said. Meanwhile, AAP leader Reena Gupta said, "Whether it's the issue of water pollution or air pollution, these issues cross administrative boundaries. There is an airshed within approximately 300 kilometres of Delhi, and the Supreme Court has consistently stated that all state governments need to work together to address this issue." However, only the AAP governments in Delhi and Punjab are actively tackling it. In Haryana, there has been a 30 per cent increase in stubble-burning incidents, while Uttar Pradesh has seen a 70 per cent increase. In contrast, Punjab has experienced a 30 per cent reduction in such incidents, she claimed.

AQI started touching 278 rendering city into gas chamber

ABHI SINGHAL ■ NEW DELHI

The Air Quality Index (AQI) has started touching poor quality marks in the national capital making it a gas chamber with the Index Value of 278 on Saturday. Even the NCR area of the capital has been experiencing the poor AQI due to the smog layer. Ghaziabad saw a 253 index value with poor air quality, followed by Noida at 229 AQI and Gurugram at 176 index value with moderate air quality. A survey conducted by digital platform LocalCircles with 21,000 residents of Delhi-NCR experiencing pollution-related ailments like sore throat, cough, and breathing difficulty. The survey revealed that 36 per cent of families have one or more members experiencing sore throat, cough, and breathing difficulty due to pollution and 27 per cent of the families have one or more

members with a runny nose and congestion. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents said they were not facing any health issues related to the poor air quality, according to the survey. With Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) in the "poor" category, the survey asked the respondents about their plans to cope. "The survey highlighted that only 18 per cent of the respondents intend to use air purifiers whereas a large chunk of respondents plan to increase their intake of immunity-boosting foods and drinks. "About 22 per cent of the people are considering leaving the city for a few days to avoid the peak pollution period around Diwali," the survey said. The poor AQI in the capital leads to the people facing health problems. The smog layer leads to choking in the throat and breathing issues. The common discomforts faced by the residents are



persistent cough, wheezing, shortness of breath, tight chest and fatigue. During the winter months, Delhi experiences severe pollution, driven by a combination of factors such as low wind speeds, a drop in temperatures, high moisture levels, and the presence of pollution particles that act as a surface for condensation.

Emissions from transportation account for approximately 11.2 per cent of Delhi's air pollution, according to the Centre's Decision Support System for Air Quality Management in Delhi. The people in old age face severe difficulties in breathing normally. The throat choke also leads to a bad throat affected just by

the bad air. The pollution moreover causes irritation and burning eyes causing a lot of discomfort to the residents even before Diwali. It is an even big horror dance for those suffering from respiratory problems, like asthma, tuberculosis (TB) and lung disorders. Dr. DK Singhal, who owns clinic in Rohini said, "The pollution is rising each day and people should take necessary precautions. They should stay away from dust and spray water around their houses to prevent the blowing of dust. The rising AQI can affect the lungs of the normal people badly causing serious respiratory problems." He further added that people should use a mask or a wet hanky to keep their mouth and nose covered and protected. On Friday, October 18, the AQI had hit 292, with the Wazirpur region being the worst affected with a reading

of 390. Delhi's Air Quality Index slipping into the 'poor' category and some areas even recording 'very poor' air quality has sparked a political blame game with the BJP accusing the ruling AAP of failing to tackle the situation. The Delhi government blamed the changing weather conditions in the city for the deteriorating air quality while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) alleged that incidents of stubble burning have increased in neighbouring Haryana and Uttar Pradesh under the BJP rule. According to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the 24-hour average AQI was recorded at 278 at 4 pm on Saturday. Of the 36 monitoring stations, 11 -- Anand Vihar, Bawana, Dwarka, Jahangirpuri, Mundka, Narela, Patparganj, Rohini, Shadipur, Sonia Vihar, Wazirpur -- recorded 'very poor' air quality.

Man held for attempt on Pannun's life in US granted bail in April this year: Sources

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Vikas Yadav, a former Indian government employee on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s wanted list, was arrested ten months ago by the Delhi Police on charges of attempted murder and kidnapping. The US authorities had charged him for his alleged role in a foiled plot to assassinate Sikh separatists Gurbhag Singh Pannun on American soil. The Special Cell of Delhi Police arrested Yadav (39) on December 18, 2023, for allegedly kidnapping a businessman living in Rohini and demanding money in the name of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. He was granted bail in April this year, sources said. According to the FIR filed



by the Special Cell, Yadav told the businessman to meet him near the office of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in south Delhi on December 11, 2023, claiming he might face a "serious threat". Accordingly, the victim along with his friend met Yadav who was accompanied by a person named Abdullah. Yadav and Abdullah allegedly pushed the victim into a car and demanded money in the name of Lawrence Bishnoi, the FIR said.

Future political responsibilities to be decided by party, Kejriwal: Satyendar Jain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior AAP leader Satyendar Jain on Saturday said his future political responsibilities will be decided by the party and its convener Arvind Kejriwal. On Saturday morning, senior AAP leader Satyendar Jain, along with his family, offered prayers at the Jain temple located in Saraswati Vihar and prayed for the well-being of all the citizens of the country. After being released from jail, Jain met Kejriwal at his residence on Ferozshah Road on Friday night. Jain, remarked that justice and the Constitution still prevail in the country, and everyone must respect them. He said, "Without the Constitution, or the courts, the BJP-led central government might have had us hanged by now." Talking about his time in prison, the senior AAP leader further added, "I often thought about how they sent me, Arvind Kejriwal, Manish



Sisodia, and Sanjay Singh to jail. They've (BJP) imprisoned many of our leaders. What is it about the AAP that makes them want to destroy us?" When asked about the CCTV footage from Tihar Jail, Jain stated, "Tihar has cameras everywhere, so why doesn't footage of anything else come out? Why is only my footage available? They claimed I was having lavish meals, but all I had was seasonal fruit and vegetables. For an entire year, I didn't eat anything. There's a canteen where anyone can buy food with money, and I have all the bills to prove it."

Apka Vidhayak Apke Dwar campaign: Atishi interacts with residents of Kalkaji

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Atishi on Saturday interacted with people of her Kalkaji constituency, highlighting the works of AAP government, under the party's campaign for upcoming Assembly polls. Visiting people in Bharat Nagar, Govindpuri, and Govindpuri Extension areas she cited achievements of the AAP government over the past 5 years, under the 'Apka Vidhayak Apke Dwar' campaign. "Kejriwal spends public money on people instead of pocketing it, while BJP calls it freebies," she said. The AAP led by Arvind Kejriwal has provided better facilities to Delhi's poorest over 10 years because he understands the struggles of the common man, Atishi said in a statement. "If providing free electricity, water, education, healthcare, and pilgrimage for the elderly using public funds is



called 'freebies,' then Kejriwal will continue doing so," she asserted. The people know that only Arvind Kejriwal truly works for the common man's benefit, she claimed and asserted that he will be re-elected as Chief Minister." Under Arvind Kejriwal's guidance, all AAP MLAs are reaching out to residents in every street and neighborhood to account for their work in their

respective constituencies and the initiatives undertaken by the Delhi government for the public's benefit. Today's event in Bharat Nagar, Govindpuri, and Govindpuri Extension marked part of "Apka Vidhayak-Aapke Dwar" outreach, where CM Atishi detailed the development work done in the Kalkaji constituency and across Delhi under Kejriwal's leadership.

BJP, AAP rattled by tremendous support to Congress' outreach campaign

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Devender Yadav on Saturday said both BJP and Aam Aadmi Party have been completely rattled by the tremendous public support to Congress' outreach campaign "Dilliwalon Aao-Dilli Chalao." The campaign carried out through seven vans equipped with mike and a chair in each vehicle and these vehicles have been touring all the seven Lok Sabha constituencies to take people's suggestions on how to improve the infrastructure and civic services in the Capital to realize their dream city. He said people want Congress back in power to resume the kind of development works it had undertaken during its 15-year rule under one Chief Minister, unlike the BJP, which had to appoint three Chief Ministers during its



five-year government to set a record in corruption and bad/ad hoc governance. Yadav charged that BJP was in collusion with the Aam Aadmi Party to deny a Dalit a chance to become the Mayor as the present Mayor has been illegally staying put in her post for the past seven months without holding the Mayoral election.

He also said it was a well-known fact that the Aam Aadmi Party was the 'B' team of the BJP, and AAP has only emulated the corrupt track record of the five years of BJP misrule in Delhi to set a new bench mark in corruption and criminal activities, without having any concern for the woes of the citizens of Delhi.

BJP protests outside CM Atishi's residence demanding CAG report be tabled

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday held a sit-in protest outside Delhi Chief Minister Atishi's Mathura Road residence, which she is scheduled to vacate soon, and demanded that the CAG report be tabled in the Delhi Legislative Assembly. The protest was led by BJP senior MLA and Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta. Gupta, hitting out at former Delhi chief minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, said in a social media post, "Kejriwal, come to your senses! Call the assembly session immediately... Bring the CAG report on the table." The BJP has been calling out the AAP government for not presenting the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report in the Assembly for the last four years. Earlier, the office of



According to officials, the CAG reports cover a variety of topics, including the state finances audit, the prevention of vehicular air pollution, public health infrastructure and services, the regulation and supply of liquor, as well as the finance accounts and appropriation accounts. Earlier, the office of

Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena also wrote to Chief Secretary Dharmendra and Finance Secretary Ashish Chandra Verma, directing them to present the pending reports by the CAG) in the Assembly. The LG office has said 12 CAG reports from 2020-2021 have been pending with the Delhi government.

GGSIU to waive fees of students winning medals in National Games

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University commonly called as the IP University on Saturday announced that it will waive the fees of students who win medals in the National Games organized by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU). The Vice Chancellor Dr. Mahesh Verma also announced a two per cent sports quota for admissions. IPU is also constructing an indoor stadium and quarter stadium in its Dwarka campus to provide international-level facilities to its students, informed the Vice Chancellor. The University's 19th Annual Sports Meet, began on October 18, and around 11,000 students from 75 affiliated colleges are participating in over three

dozen sports competitions, including Judo and Kho-Kho for the first time. Most events will be held in both men and women categories, promoting women's equality and empowerment. According to Prof. Manpreet Kaur Kang, Director for Student Welfare the sports competitions will include Athletics, Race, Shot Put, Long Jump, Relay Heats, Badminton, Cross Country Race, Basketball, Kabaddi, Tennis, Volleyball, Tug of War, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Discus Throw, Yoga, Chess, BodyBuilding, Power Lifting and Table Tennis. Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Youth Affairs, Sports, and Employment, inaugurated the sports meet. The event was also graced by Olympic bronze medalist Aman Sehrawat.



An artist decorates a woman's hand with mehndi (henna) ahead of the Karwa Chauth festival

PM Modi to inaugurate multiple projects in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay foundation stone of multiple airport projects worth over Rs 6,100 crore during his visit to Varanasi on Sunday. He will also inaugurate multiple development initiatives in Varanasi. A statement by Prime Minister's Office (PMO) here on Saturday said he will visit Varanasi on Sunday. At around two PM he will inaugurate R J Sankara Eye Hospital. Thereafter, at around 4:15 PM, he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects in Varanasi. The eye hospital will offer comprehensive consultations and treatments for various eye conditions. Prime Minister

will also address the gathering on the occasion. In line with his commitment to boost connectivity, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone for expansion of airport runway and construction of a new terminal building and allied works of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Varanasi worth

around Rs 2,870 crore. He will also lay the foundation stone of New Civil Enclave at Agra airport worth more than Rs 570 crore, at Darbhanga airport worth around Rs 910 crore and at Bagdogra airport worth around Rs 1,550 crore. Prime Minister will inaugurate new terminal buildings of Rewa Airport, Maa Mahamaya Airport, Ambikapur and Sarsawa Airport worth over Rs 220 crore. The combined passenger handling capacity of these airports will increase to more than 2.3 crore passengers annually. The designs of these airports are influenced and derived from the common elements of heritage structures of the region. In line with his vision to provide top-quality infrastructure for sports, Prime Minister will inaugurate Phases 2 and 3 of redevelopment of Varanasi Sports Complex worth over Rs 210 crore under Khelo India scheme and the Smart City Mission. The project aims to create a state-of-the-art sports complex featuring a National Centre of Excellence, players' hostels, sports science centre, practice fields for various sports, indoor shooting ranges, combat sports arenas among others. He will also inaugurate 100-bed girls' and boys' hostels and a public pavilion at Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Sports Stadium, Lalpur. Prime Minister will inaugurate tourism development works of Buddhism related areas in Sarnath. These enhancements include the construction of pedestrian-friendly streets, new sewer lines and upgraded drainage system, organised vending zone with modern designer vending carts to promote local handicraft vendors, among others. He will also inaugurate multiple other initiatives like tourism development works at Banasar Temple and Gurudham Temple, beautification and redevelopment of parks etc.

Military leaders must embrace critical thinking and technological advancement: Rajnath Singh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday here called upon the military leaders to think critically, adapt to unforeseen circumstances and leverage latest technological advancements to gain a strategic advantage in today's ever-evolving geopolitical landscape. Addressing the MPhil Convocation ceremony of 62nd National Defence College (NDC) course (2022 batch), he urged the officers to become strategic thinkers who are capable of anticipating future conflicts, understanding global political dynamics and leading with both intelligence and empathy. "Warfare, today, has surpassed the traditional battlefields and now operates in a multi-domain environment where cyber, space and information warfare are as critical as conventional operations. Cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns and economic warfare have become tools that can destabilise a whole nation without a single shot being fired. There is a need for military leaders to possess the ability to analyse complex problems and devise innovative solutions," Rajnath said.

He described the rapid technological advancements in today's times as the most crucial force which drives the evolution of a future-ready military. "From Drones and Autonomous Vehicles to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Quantum Computing, the technologies shaping modern warfare are evolving at a breath-taking pace. Our officers must understand these technologies and be able to harness them," he stated. The defence minister exhorted the defence officers to carry-out in-depth analysis on how best to leverage niche technologies, such as AI, which has the potential to revolutionise military operations. He also stressed on the need to decide on the threshold level of the decisions AI is allowed to take, highlighting the importance of human intervention. Increasing reliance on AI in decision-making processes can raise concerns about accountability & the potential for unintended consequences, he said. Rajnath underlined the need to stay prepared to tackle the possibility of adversaries weaponising the tools and technologies used by people on a daily basis. "The mere thought that our adversaries exploiting the tools serves as a reminder of the urgency with which we must prepare for these threats. Institutions like NDC must evolve their course curriculum to not only incorporate case studies on such unconventional warfare but also to drive strategic innovation. The ability to anticipate, adapt and respond will define our readiness in the face of ever-evolving challenges," he said. On the aspect of ethical dilemma faced by military leaders about the extent to which machines should make life-and-death decisions, the defence minister said academic learning in ethics, philosophy and military history will provide officers with the tools to handle the sensitive subject and make sound decisions. He highlighted the critical role played by defence academic institutions, such as NDC, in instilling the moral framework in future leaders to deal with the challenges of present-day warfare. He urged the officers to have a firm grasp of geopolitics, international relations and the complexities of global security alliances, as the decisions made by them can have far-reaching consequences that extend beyond the battlefield and into the realm of diplomacy, economics and international law. Rajnath added that the curriculum of academic institutions must remain dynamic and adaptable to ensure its relevance to practitioners in the field. He described the challenges of modern warfare, ethical dilemmas, and strategic leadership as not just topics for reflection, but the foundation upon which the future of India's national security will be built. Emphasising that learning must be a continuous process not confined to the duration of a course, he suggested the introduction of online, short-term modules on critical subjects to extend the reach and impact of NDC. Defence Secretary-designate R K Singh, Commandant NDC Air Marshal Hardeep Bains, Registrar, University of Madras Professor S. Elumalai, senior officers of Ministry of Defence and faculty members of NDC were present on the occasion.

AIIA protocols focusing on breast cancer



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Protocols focusing on integrative management strategies for breast cancer, comparative organoleptic profiling of herbs, and standard guidelines for labor and post-natal care through ayurveda were key highlights of discussion at the three-day global event by All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) here that was concluded on Saturday. The initiative seeks to validate and adapt ancient wisdom to address contemporary health challenges so as to explore and integrate these time-tested practices into modern healthcare solutions. On the last day of the international conference, 'Advancements of Research & Global Opportunities for Holistic Ayurveda - AROHA-2024', Prof. (Dr.) Tanuja Nesari, Director AIIA, said the event represents a milestone in the global recognition and integration of Ayurveda into modern healthcare systems. "Our collaborations with esteemed institutions worldwide and the exchange of knowledge during this conference will undoubtedly drive new innovations and opportunities in Ayurvedic research and practice," she added. The event successfully brought together some of the brightest minds from around the world to discuss and advance the role of Ayurveda in addressing global health challenges.

Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar is NCW's ninth chairperson

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar has been appointed the ninth chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW) succeeding Rekha Sharma, according to an official order. The appointment made under Section 3 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990, will be for a period of three years or until she reaches the age of 65, whichever comes first, a government notification issued on Saturday said. Rahatkar's tenure will begin with immediate effect. The announcement will also be published in the Gazette of India. In addition to the appointment of Rahatkar,

Archana Majumdar has been officially named a member of the NCW for a tenure of three years, as per a notification issued by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The NCW, a statutory body, is empowered to work towards the advancement of women's rights. Its mandate includes reviewing the constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women. According to a statement issued by the Union Women and Child Development Ministry, Rahatkar has demonstrated leadership skills across various political

and social responsibilities. During her tenure as the chairperson of the Maharashtra State Commission for Women (2016-2021), she spearheaded initiatives like "Sakshama" (support for acid attack survivors), "Prajwala" (linking self-help groups to Central government schemes), and "Suhita" (a 24x7 helpline service for women). She also worked on legal reforms focusing on issues like Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO), anti-triple talaq cells, and anti-human trafficking units. Rahatkar also introduced digital literacy programmes and launched a publication named "Saad" dedicated to women's issues.

ED raided YSRC MP and others in money laundering probe

PTI ■ HYDERABAD



The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday raided the premises of former YSRC MP and Telugu film producer M V V Satyanarayana and some others in Andhra Pradesh as part of a money laundering probe linked to a land grab case, official sources said. At least five locations in Visakhapatnam, including that of the former MP and an auditor, were being raided by the officials of the federal agency, they said. The agency officials collected some documents during the raids, according to the sources. Satyanarayana, a YSRC MP from 2019 to 2024, unsuccessfully contested the Andhra Pradesh Assembly polls earlier this year from Visakhapatnam East seat. He has produced a number of Telugu films. The money laundering case stems from a Visakhapatnam police FIR filed against Satyanarayana and others on June 22 for allegedly grabbing government land meant for building a

residential facility for senior citizens and orphans. The complainant in the police case is Ch Jagadeeswarudu who said he and his wife were promoters of Haigreeva Infratech Projects Ltd., a company which was registered in April 2006. He said they were given 12.51 cents of land in Yendada village by the Andhra Pradesh government in 2008 to build homes for senior citizens and orphans. Jagadeeswarudu told police that he engaged an auditor named G Venkateswara Rao, who in turn introduced him to Satyanarayana and a man named Gadde Brahmaji for developing the government-mandated project on the said land. An MoU was signed between them in 2020 but Jagadeeswarudu alleged that his and his wife's signatures were "fabricated" by the accused and they had made them sign blank papers leading to "misappropriation" of the documents. He told police this was a "criminal conspiracy" to "grab" his land and the accused had "threatened" them with dire consequences. The ED is looking at these allegations and hence the searches are being conducted, the sources said.

Enforcement Directorate issues new guidelines for summons

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Enforcement Directorate has issued a fresh circular directing its officials or Investigating Officers (IOs) to not question people called on summons at "unearthly" hours and not keep them waiting for hours at their office. The technical circular was issued on October 11 after the Bombay High Court directed ED to issue directives in this context as it took up the petition of a person who was summoned by the ED and "detained overnight and interrogated." The HC found that the 64-year-old petitioner was summoned to the ED office for questioning and was kept waiting post mid-night. Recording of his statement, at unearthly hours, "definitely results in deprivation of a person's sleep, basic human right of an individual", it said. The court said it "disapproved" of such a practice by the agency and directed it to issue a circular or directive to its IOs regarding timing and

recording of statement of people following issuance of summons under section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The ED subsequently informed the court that it has issued a fresh technical circular on October 11 in this context. The circular said that the authorised officer or IO of the ED "shall be well prepared with copies of documents to be confronted as well as questionnaire to examine the person summoned at appointed date and time". The IO, while fixing the date and time of the compliance of the summons, should ensure that the person so summoned is taken up for examination on appointed time and date without keeping him waiting for hours, said the circular.

The circular added that considering the nature of money laundering offence, where a person can transfer or conceal the proceeds of crime or destroy digital evidence in short time using online tools or by using mobile phone or other digital media, the IO "shall endeavour to conclude the examination of the person summoned expeditiously, ideally on the same day or the following day". "This approach may minimize the opportunity to the person summoned either to transfer or conceal proceeds of crime or to fabricate make believe and concocted explanations," it said. The circular added that the IO should be made to record statement of person summoned during "earthly hours", which is during office hours rather than stretching it too late at night. It added examination of senior citizens, persons with serious medical condition, sick or infirm (subject to verification of medical records or condition), should be "restricted" to earthly hours and that it would be "appropriate to adjourn the examination to next date or any other mutually agreed date as a matter of practice". In exceptional circumstances, the circular said, where the IO has "credible" information or material that the person if allowed to leave without completion of examination will either alienate proceeds of crime or destroy evidence or past conduct of person summoned or abscond or may not join investigation, the IO may record the statement "beyond earthly hours" after recording such reason on case file and taking approval of a senior officer. The HC bench of Justice Prithviraj K Chavan and Justice Revati Mohite Dere asked the ED to put up this circular on its website and X handle in its final order issued while disposing off the petition on October 14. The ED has power to question people linked to a case investigation and accused under the PMLA, the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) and the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA).

BJP government is 'anti farmer' : Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday accused the Narendra Modi government of being "anti-farmer" and alleged that neither is adequate procurement being done nor are farmers getting fair price for their produce. AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a post of X, alleged that the policies of the "non-biological prime minister" have been anti-farmer since he assumed power in 2014. "Neither is adequate procurement taking place nor are farmers getting fair prices, nor is there any legal guarantee of MSP (minimum support price)," Ramesh said, alleging that the "deception, fraud and cheating" done by this government with the farmers stand exposed. Congress' media coordinator

Abhay Dubey alleged that the way the Modi government has "mistreated" farmers in the last 10 years, this has made it clear that "Narendra Modi is anti-farmer". "Our demand farmers should get legal guarantee of MSP. The support price for soybean crops of farmers of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh should be fixed at least at Rs 6,000. "If the support price for this crop is fixed at Rs 6,000, then the difference amount should also be deposited in the accounts of those farmers who have already sold their crop for less. PM Modi should consider the formality of declaring the support price," Dubey told reporters. He claimed that one of the first decisions taken by the Modi government after coming to power was that if the state government gives a bonus of Rs 150 to farmers



on MSP on paddy and wheat, they will stop buying grains on MSP. In the second decision, he said, the BJP government brought three ordinances to trample the law brought by the Congress government on fair compensation for farmers' land. In the third decision, the Modi government gave an affidavit in the Supreme Court saying if farmers are given a support price of 50 per cent of the cost, the market would collapse, he said. Narendra Modi said in a rally that 'we are bringing the world's best crop insurance scheme', but the

result was that this scheme became a profit-making scheme for private companies," he alleged. Dubey claimed that a report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee has made a shocking revelation that the then agriculture minister Narendra Tomar was writing letters to Narendra Modi since 2017 to remove GST on agricultural equipment but the Modi government never took cognisance of it. "Now the Modi government has announced the support price for the Rabi season but every time neither adequate procurement is done nor is there any legal guarantee of the support price. That means in the last 10 years, the Modi government has always beaten the farmers with sticks and hit them hard," he said.

Nari shakti blessings inspire PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday that blessings from women inspire him to keep working to build a developed India, after a BJP leader shared a story of a tribal woman who insisted on giving Rs 100 to convey her gratitude to Modi. Sharing pictures, BJP vice president Baijayant Jay Panda said in a social media post that he met the tribal woman during the party's membership drive in Odisha's Sundargarh district. "This Adivasi lady insisted on giving me Rs 100 to 'convey thanks' to PM Narendra Modi. She brushed aside my demurrals & explanations that it wasn't necessary, &

simply would not take no for an answer until I finally relented. "This is a reflection of the transformation that Odisha & Bharat is experiencing," he said in his post. Modi responded, "Very touched by this affection. I bow to our Nari Shakti for always blessing me. Their blessings inspire me to keep working to build a Viksit Bharat."

SET FOR FIRST TIME CHAMPION AS NEW ZEALAND-SOUTH AFRICA CLASH IN FINAL

PTI ■ DUBAI

New Zealand's golden generation, led by inspirational Sophie Devine, will have one last chance to lay hands on a global ICC trophy when it meets a gritty South Africa in the summit clash of the T20 World Cup which is set to throw a new champion, here Sunday. New Zealand's women's team had won the ODI World Cup back in 2000 but none of the current squad members were part of that historic title triumph. Before this event began, New Zealand were in the trenches having lost 10 matches on the trot in the format but under Devine this bunch, comprising of the venerable Suzie Bates and the assuring Amelia Kerr, has done wonders, bringing the side in contention for the ultimate prize. It is most probably the last time the Black Shirts will have Devine, Bates and Lea Tahuhu playing of the national side in a global tournament. Devine, 35, has more than 7000 runs under her belt in white-ball formats while the 37-year-old Bates has more than 10,000 runs to her name. Pacer Tahuhu, 34, has 112 wickets in ODIs and 93 in T20s.

They won't leave any stone unturned to ensure that they have a World Cup trophy in their cabinet. South Africa on the other side will be equally determined to complete the unfinished business as they had lost the 2023 World Cup final to Australia at home. They have an opportunity to erase painful memories as they had lost by a mere 19 runs in the close contest. New Zealand have one or other player to rise the occasion in the tournament and in the semifinal against the West Indies, if they failed to set a target big enough to daunt the free-flowing Caribbean batters, their bowlers responded with tidy spells throughout the game to eke out a memorable win. Kerr's wicket tally has swelled to 12 in the tournament as she found apt support from the other end in the likes of Eden Carson (8), Rosemary Mair (7) and the experienced Lea Tahuhu. New Zealand announced their intentions with a big win against India first up and followed that up with consistent performances across departments. A 60-run loss to Australia, arguably the strongest team in the competition,

WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP FINAL



notwithstanding, the Kiwis weren't unnerved as they went on to pip the West Indies in the final over of their low-scoring semifinal to make their third final. When the tournament began towards the end of the first decade of this century, New Zealand appeared to be the team to beat as they made two consecutive finals but got pipped by England and Australia once each. Bates and Devine, the survivors from those campaigns, will thus get a third crack in winning the first ICC trophy for New Zealand in white-ball cricket since 2000 when the men's team won the Champions Trophy in Kenya. But against them will be the formidable South Africa who scripted history of sorts to have stopped the all-dominating Australian team from reaching their eighth consecutive final in the last 15 years and seven editions of the T20 World Cup. If New Zealand has Kerr topping the charts for most successful bowlers, South Africa have two of their top-order batters - Laura Wolvaardt (190 runs) and Tazmin Brits (170 runs) - lodged at the top of the batting charts in this tournament. South Africa's all-round might will pose the sternest challenge as the Proteas side is coming off a comprehensive eight-wicket thrashing of Australia, having restricted them to a mere 135/5 and knocked off the target with more than two overs to spare. While a lot will depend on the pair of Wolvaardt and Brits at the top, SA will need the likes of Anneke Bosch and Marizanne Kapp to chip in with the bat too. Similarly, Nonkululeko Mlaba (10 wickets) would also need the rest of the bowlers to replicate their performance from the semifinal, in which they collectively kept it tight to not allow Australia to get away with the bat.

SQUADS:
New Zealand: Sophie Devine (captain), Suzie Bates, Eden Carson, Isabella Gaze (wk), Maddy Green, Brooke Halliday, Fran Jonas, Leigh Kasparek, Amelia Kerr, Jess Kerr, Rosemary Mair, Molly Penfold, Georgia Plimmer, Hannah Rowe, Lea Tahuhu.
South Africa: Laura Wolvaardt (c), Anneke Bosch, Tazmin Brits, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Mieke de Ridder (wk), Ayanda Hlubi, Sinalo Jaftha (wk), Marizanne Kapp, Ayabonga Khaka, Sune Luus, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Seshnie Naidu, Tumi Sekhukhune, Chloe Tryon.



Guirassy's late goal earns Dortmund a Bundesliga win

AP ■ DORTMUND (GERMANY)

Serhou Guirassy scored late as Borussia Dortmund beat promoted St. Pauli 2-1 in the Bundesliga on Friday, easing some pressure on the club before facing Real Madrid. Substitute Jamie Gittens invigorated Dortmund's attack, beating a defender and crossing for Guirassy to head the winner in the 83rd minute, just five minutes after Eric Smith had equalized with a thunderous strike for the visitors. Dortmund had dominated from the start but failed to turn possession into chances. St. Pauli goalkeeper Nikola Vasilj twice denied Guirassy when it seemed the Guinea star had to score. Ramy Bensebaini broke the deadlock in the 43rd with a header to Pascal Grof's cross. St. Pauli had a goal by Morgan Guilavogui ruled out through VAR for offside in the 30th. Dortmund next visits Madrid in the Champions League on Tuesday. The two teams met in last season's Champions League final, which Madrid won 2-0. Dortmund was under pressure after losing 2-1 to Union Berlin before the international break.

NZ edges closer to victory after 36 years in spite of Sarfaraz, Pant fight

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

In a stunning display of fight two men stood at the crease, Sarfaraz Khan resumes the day four with a score of (70) along with left hand batsmen Rishabh Pant who started his innings from day 4 after Virat dismissal on last ball of day three. The Right-Left combination of batters piled up 113 runs on the morning session of day both Sarfaraz and Rishabh took India to strong position after first innings failure on day one. Rishabh who struck 53 unbeaten and Sarfaraz who score his maiden century at crucial stage of the match scoring 125 not out from 154 balls with 16 fours and three sixes before rain interrupted the play. Two batters gave India a strong hand to make a



comeback in this match after 177 runs partnership between the duo got broke down with the wicket of Sarfaraz Khan on a mammoth score of 150 runs by Tim Southee and Rishabh Pant who misses out his 7th test century by one run (99). Their innings gave a hope before their dismissals, but their dismissals gave a significant decline for the

William O'Rourke getting advantage of extra bounce and movement off the Chinnaaswamy surface. New Zealand opens begin their chase with Tom Latham and Devon Conway yet to open their accounts, rain brought an early end to the day's play with the visitors playing just four balls in the second innings. After the disintegrated lower order performance India managed to give 107 runs to New Zealand to win the bengaluru test match. Tom Latham's team is on the verge of creating history of winning the test match in India after 36 years. The last time New Zealand won a Test match in India was way back in 1989 when Sir Richard Hadlee got 10 wickets at the Wankhede to ensure a huge 136-run win.

Mohammedan Sporting look to exploit home conditions against visiting Kerala Blasters



PTI ■ KOLKATA

Debutants Mohammedan Sporting Club will seek their first home win in the Indian Super League (ISL) when they host Kerala Blasters FC in a tricky match here on Sunday. Both teams are hungry for victory, but for Mohammedan, this game is crucial, as they desperately need their first home win of the season, and the visiting Kerala Blasters aren't going to make it easy. Mohammedan enter this game after a 0-3 defeat to Mohun Bagan Super Giant in the Kolkata derby. Andrey Chernyshov's men have managed four points from their first four games, leaving them 10th on the points table.

With two winless home results already, a victory against Kerala Blasters can prevent them from joining the likes of Jamshedpur FC, East Bengal, and Punjab FC as teams without a home win in their first three games this season. For Kerala Blasters, an away fixture has thrown up defensive challenges. Their last nine trips on the road have seen them concede at least one goal in each game, managing just one win. A victory on Sunday would not only break that trend but also mark a significant milestone, bringing them their third consecutive win in Kolkata, an unprecedented feat in their history. Their last two visits to Kolkata were fruitful, with a 1-0

victory over Mohun Bagan Super Giant and a 2-1 win against East Bengal FC. A victory on Sunday would strengthen their chances of getting into the top-six and signal their intent for the rest of the season. Sunday's match will be the first face-off between Mohammedan and Kerala Blasters in the ISL. Mohammedan head coach Andrey Chernyshov gave an in-depth analysis of the Kerala Blasters FC setup, but expressed confidence that his team is ready for the challenge. "After a break we started our work for the game. Kerala Blasters are a good and strong team. They have players who have played for a long time in the ISL. This season they are doing well now. "They are really good in attack because they score every match. It doesn't matter if they play home or away because they score. We need to be ready for that. We worked in the training about it. We'll be ready for this situation tomorrow on the ground," Chernyshov said in the pre-match press conference. Kerala Blasters head coach Mikael Stahre admitted that Mohammedan are hungry for success. He insisted that his side will follow their tactical plan appropriately to get a positive outcome on Sunday. "Firstly all the ISL games are competitive. So we have to be humble and organised. They have the hunger and we have a lot of that too. "My job is to prepare tactical things and pass on the energy and instructions to players. We have been practicing well during the international break. We are looking forward to win the game," Stahre said.

Five Indian footballers selected to go through training session at Old Trafford in Manchester

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Five Indian footballers will go through training at Old Trafford in Manchester after emerging as winners in the fourth edition of United We Play, a grassroots football initiative. The event saw the participation of over 15,000 budding Indian footballers across 18 cities, culminating in a grand finale in the presence of Manchester United legend and all-time great Gary Neville in Chandigarh. In the finale, PC Lalchhuanawma (Mizoram), Shreejal Kisku (Bhubaneswar), Mohd Ayan (Lucknow),



Bhakta Bahadur Pariyar (Nepal) and Chanason Chaiyatham (Bangkok) were shortlisted. These players will be given the opportunity to visit Old Trafford to participate in

activities like a match-day experience, training session with Manchester United Soccer School coaches and legend interactions. "Delighted to see the dedication and passion for football among young children in India," Neville, whose illustrious career includes eight English Premier League titles and two UEFA Champions League titles for Manchester United, said in a release. "Many congratulations to the young players whose hard work has paid off today. I am sure that the experience that they will have at the iconic Old Trafford, will be memories of a lifetime." The launch of the fourth edition of United We Play took place at Kolkata in December last year, where former Manchester United and French footballer Louis Saha kicked-off the programme.

Lando Norris in hot pursuit of Max Verstappen at United States GP

AP ■ AUSTIN (TEXAS)

Max Verstappen and Red Bull are in retreat as the Formula 1 season resumes in Texas. The series returns from a month-long autumn break at the United States Grand Prix with the Dutch driver still leading the championship, but his car has gone backward in terms of performance and results while McLaren's Lando Norris pulls ever closer in the title chase. The last time on the track, Verstappen finished second in Singapore, only to watch Norris drive off in the distance and win by a whopping 21 seconds. It was the kind of gap Verstappen crushed the field with all last season. "After Singapore I just wanted to keep going. We were in a good rhythm. I think we still are in a good rhythm and have been for quite a while," Norris said. Verstappen still has a 52-point lead as he chases his fourth

consecutive championship with six races left. That race gap to Norris in Singapore was worrisome, and raised more pressure on Red Bull to reverse its slide, or at least find something that can keep Norris at bay. The race weekend at the Circuit of the Americas has a lot of points on offer that Norris can snatch if Red Bull continues to struggle. Saturday features the first sprint race since Austria in June. Verstappen has won all three previous sprint races this season and has won the main race in Austin the last three years. But he hasn't won this season since the Spanish Grand Prix on June 23 and has earned just three podium finishes in that span. Verstappen at times has described his once dominant car as "undrivable" and a "monster". McLaren has already overtaken Red Bull to seize the lead in the team constructors' championship, and another

win on a track where Verstappen has been dominant would be a dagger. Red Bull is bringing a package of upgrades it hopes will get its once dominant car back to the front. Verstappen stopped short of calling it a make-or-break race weekend in the title chase, but teammate Sergio Perez called it "crucial" for Red Bull. The first results were positive for Red Bull: Verstappen qualified for pole position for the Saturday sprint race, putting 0.250 seconds between himself and Norris in fourth. "I'm happy with today. The whole day the car was working quite well. Happy to be first, it's been a while," Verstappen said. "We'll do the best we can tomorrow in the sprint, but we know the most points are available on Sunday. That's where we really want to do well." Norris sounded confident this week that McLaren will keep the pressure on Red Bull. "I know people ask every

F1 SEASON RESUMES IN AUSTIN



weekend if this is a weekend that's going to change something. It can go my way. It can go Max's way," Norris said. "But I'm happy with what we're doing as a team and how we're working together. ... It's not easy. I need more than just me first and Max second." Mercedes driver George Russell predicted Norris to win the title based on current form,

despite the points gap. "I think Lando can absolutely win this championship and I would probably say he's (the favorite) to do so with their form right now comparing with Red Bull," Russell said. McLaren chief executive Zak Brown tapped the brakes on that just a bit. "A lot of racing left to go," Brown said. "We're going to

need Lando to win a lot of races and Max to have an unusually bad day." Red Bull inspection Red Bull allowed race stewards to inspect Verstappen's cockpit in front of television cameras to give them a look at a device it is believed could be used to adjust the height of the car. Rival teams have worried it could be used to change car

height between qualifying and a race, which is strictly prohibited. Red Bull has insisted the device is inaccessible once the car is assembled, and that the team never cheated. Still, the FIA said it will tighten parc ferme requirements, and applied a seal to the device in the Red Bull cars that will show if there is any tampering. Small talk Verstappen said he will continue to give short answers in official race news conferences after he was punished by the sport's governing body FIA for swearing in Singapore. "I prefer of course to talk less, so it's fine anyway for me," Verstappen told reporters gathered Thursday on the porch of the Red Bull team hospitality tent. Russell, who is a director of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, said the drivers will likely issue a statement on the matter next week ahead of the Mexico City Grand Prix. "We don't want to be taking

away the heat of the moment emotions that drivers show during a race," Russell said. "For the drivers, it is very challenging when you have a microphone, you're talking with your team, you're in the middle of battle," Russell said. "But if it's an environment like this maybe we have a duty to be conscious of our words." Smooth surface Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc were disqualified from their second and sixth place finishes in Austin last year when their cars failed post-race inspections for worn down skid blocks. Mercedes blamed the problem in part on the bumps around COTA, which other drivers, notably Verstappen, had complained as not worthy of an F1 venue. The track has since then been completely resurfaced. And it has already seen some racing. The Lone Star Le Mans World Endurance Championship race last month broke in the new surface.



A BOLD CELEBRATION OF MODERN GROOMING

At 'BAARAAT by Tasva', Bollywood icon Ranbir Kapoor took the spotlight, redefining the modern groom with breathtaking designs by acclaimed designer Tarun Tahiliani. This fashion showcase brilliantly celebrated individuality, effortlessly merging traditional elegance with contemporary style, leaving the audience impressed, writes SAKSHI PRIYA

In a breathtaking display of fashion and culture, TASVA, the men's Indian wear brand by Aditya Birla Fashion Retail Ltd, partnered with the renowned designer Tarun Tahiliani to present 'BAARAAT by Tasva'. Set against the regal backdrop of Travancore Palace, this event was not just a fashion show; it was a vibrant celebration of what it means to be a modern groom in today's wedding landscape.

The evening truly began with Ranbir Kapoor's grand entrance, and what an entrance it was! Arriving in a charming vintage wedding car, he set the tone for the night with an effortless charm that had everyone captivated. Clad in a stunning sherwani that exudes luxury, his outfit was a masterclass in combining tradition with modernity. Every intricate detail of his ensemble reflected the spirit of the Tasva man - confident, stylish and deeply connected to his roots. It was a s



impossible not to feel the excitement in the air as he stepped onto the runway, a moment that resonated with everyone present. Social media erupted with praise, as fans shared videos of Ranbir's magnetic presence. One enthusiastic observer captured the sentiment perfectly: "It's like Ranbir is still in the Channa Mereya era,

dancing like that in the show!" The sheer joy he radiated reminded us why we adore him; he brought an infectious energy to the event, making it memorable for all. Ranbir's words about the collection struck a chord, "This collection gives grooms the chance to express their individuality while honouring their roots." This perspective is

a refreshing shift in wedding fashion, emphasising that grooms should no longer fade into the background but rather stand out and express their unique styles. The Tasva collection beautifully achieves this, showcasing an array of sherwanis and bandhgals that cater to diverse tastes, allowing each groom to shine in his own right.

What makes 'BAARAAT by Tasva' truly remarkable is its focus on the groom as an integral part of the wedding narrative. In a world where bridal fashion often steals the show, this event boldly flipped the script. It's a powerful reminder that weddings are not just about the bride; they're about two individuals coming together, each with their own story to tell.

With Ranbir Kapoor leading the charge, Tasva has crafted a message that resonates with modern grooms: it's time to embrace your identity, wear your heritage with pride, and make a statement on one of the most significant days of your life. As we witnessed this fabulous evening, it was clear that the modern groom is not just a participant but a true star of the show, ready to step into the spotlight and make his mark.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar



NEW OFFERINGS



A MODERN TWIST ON ANCIENT STORIES

Meenakshi Jha Banerjee's solo exhibition, "Aadhura Kuch Bhi Nahin," offers a unique blend of contemporary artistry and Mithila folk traditions. With over two decades of experience, she reinterprets ancient motifs through a modern lens, showcasing her mastery in merging simplicity with intricate detailing. Her work reflects a dialogue between tradition and innovation, inviting viewers to explore the depth of her creative journey. Don't miss the chance to witness this unique exhibition, mark your presence!

EVENT DETAILS

Exhibition Dates: Till October 21, 2024
Timings: 11 AM - 8 PM
Venue: Shridharani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi

EXPERIENCE THE PASSION

"IN SOFT STROKES" by Art Konsult Featuring the Art of Awani Kant delves into the themes of love, desire and passion through vibrant and expressive paintings. His distinctive style merges sensuality and symbolism, using everyday



elements to highlight the beauty of the female form while grounding it in life's realities. This exhibition invites viewers to reconnect with deep, forgotten emotions through a captivating visual journey. Art enthusiasts and the curious are encouraged to immerse themselves in this evocative experience and discover how Awani Kant's works can inspire reflection and conversation about the beauty of human emotion.

EVENT DETAILS

Exhibition Dates: Till 30th October 2024
Venue: Art Konsult, 1, Basement, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi - 110016
Visiting Hours: 11:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

AMERICAN PECAN FESTIVAL

Indulge in the rich and versatile taste of American pecans with "The Indulgent" American Pecan Festival menu at Andaz Delhi by Hyatt. This exclusive menu showcases savoury and sweet pecan-infused delights like Pecan Quiche, Pecan Stuffed Mushrooms, Miniature Monkey Bread, and a Pecan Infused Café Mocha. Don't miss this culinary experience that brings the health benefits and unique flavours of pecans to your plate.



EVENT DETAILS

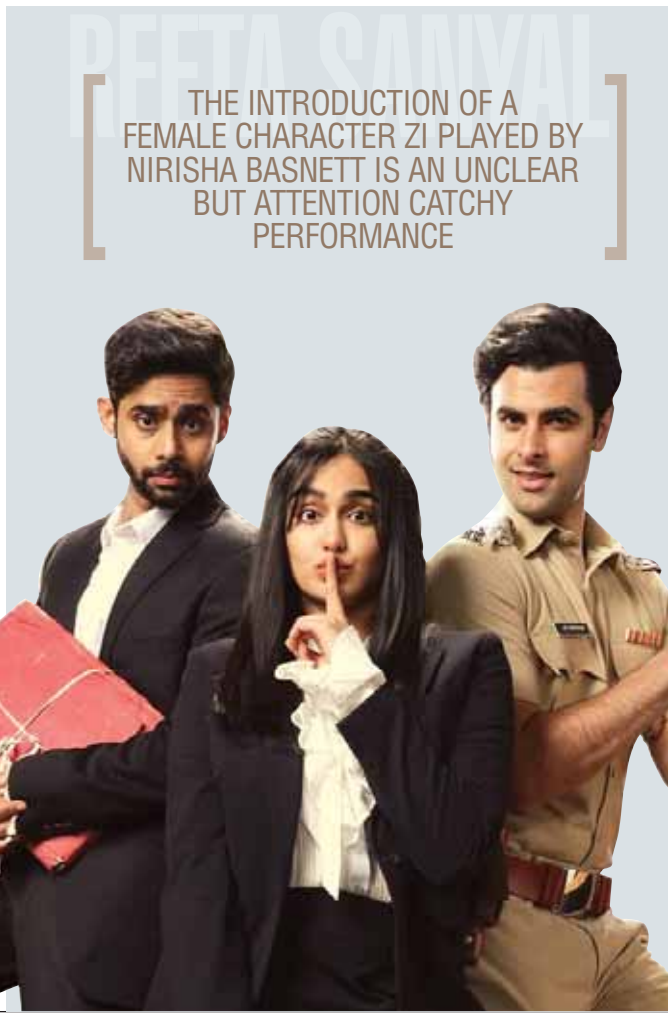
Venue: Andaz Delhi by Hyatt, Asset No. 1, Aerocity, New Delhi
Dates: October 15 - November 15
Price for Two: Rs 1700

REETA SANYAL

THE ADVOCATE OF THE UNEXPECTED

Reeta Sanyal has a promising start, but with a loose plot and flat comedy, writes ABHI SINGHAL

Stepping into the world of comedy and crime, 'Reeta Sanyal' is a legal crime thriller TV series on Disney Plus Hotstar, starring Adah Sharma as Reeta Sanyal in the lead, Rahul Dev as M. Raj Thakral, Manik Papneja as Ishan Dwivedi, and Ankur Rathee as Jai Vardhan. The episodes for the ongoing series release every Monday to Friday. The first episode of the series opens with a light and funny scene of Reeta Sanyal (Adah Sharma) as the advocate and protagonist defending a case of the dog Rocky but frustrated in need of new and bigger cases. The story unfolds with Reeta encountering Keshav outside the courtroom when Keshav's mother was arrested by the police in the case of local MLA Parav Rane's death. When Reeta forces Keshav for more information, he tells Reeta that it wasn't his mother who committed the crime, but he claimed that he killed the MLA like a "perfect murder." When Reeta decides to take on Keshav's case, she discovers that her opponent advocate is none other than Raj Thakral (played by Rahul Dev), a man with whom she shares a complicated history relating to her own father. Talking about



THE INTRODUCTION OF A FEMALE CHARACTER ZI PLAYED BY NIRISHA BASNETT IS AN UNCLEAR BUT ATTENTION CATCHY PERFORMANCE

the characters, Adah Sharma plays a serious and humorous role within the series. She shines as usual being the only one in the web series, making it gripping and giving a reason to the audience to watch. A strong entry for Adah stayed missing from the series but was covered up by her acting skills. Rahul Dev has a short but strong opening presence as a bad guy goon in the story till the first four episodes.

The introduction of a female character Zi played by Nirisha Basnett is an unclear but attention catching performance. Manik Papneja as Ishan gives his bit as a companion to Adah. Ankur Rathee as Jai Vardhan, a handsome cop in the series having a liking feeling towards the protagonist.

The upcoming episodes might also explore the romantic angle between either Adah and Ishan or Adah and Jai, still unclear in the opening. Despite a strong performance by Adah in the beginning, 'Reeta Sanyal' fails to deliver a gripping narrative. The series struggles with a weak plot and uninspiring humor, leaving viewers feeling discontent. Concluding to say that, 'Reeta Sanyal' comes across as an incompetent, and the first five episodes bring nothing new.

“Love is the flower of life,
and blossoms
unexpectedly and without
law, and must be plucked
where it is found, and
enjoyed for the brief hour
of its duration”
—DH Lawrence

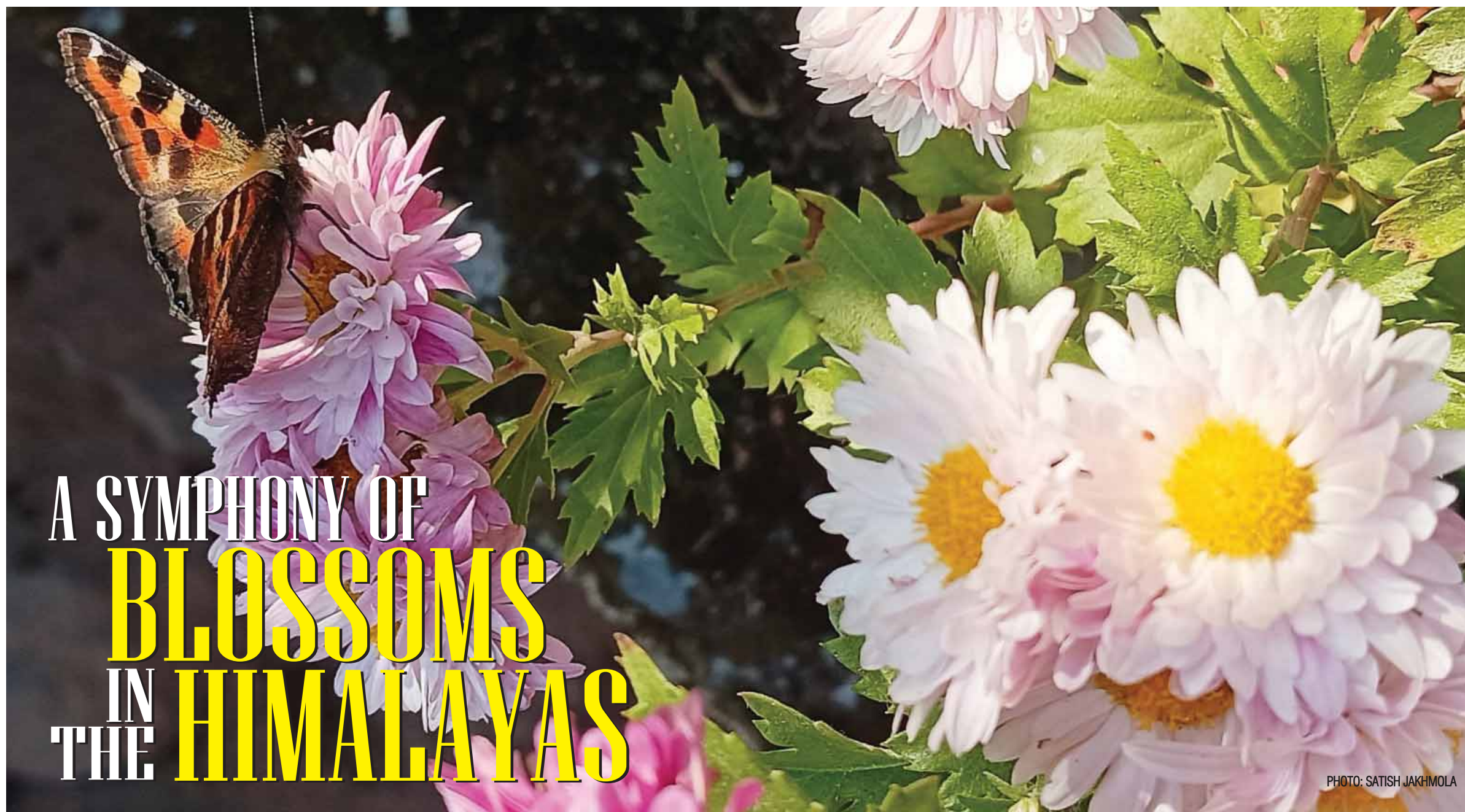
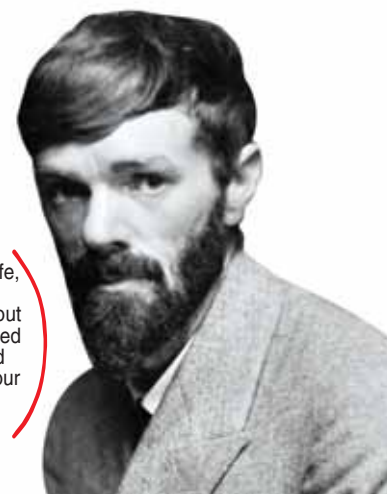


PHOTO: SATISH JAKHMOLA

A SYMPHONY OF BLOSSOMS IN THE HIMALAYAS

A journey to the Valley of Flowers is nothing short of a magical experience. It overwhelms and rejuvenates like no other place on the planet, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

During the last rainy season, I packed my bags to venture into a rather unexplored destination, a hidden gem – the *Valley of Flowers*. Nestled in the heart of the western Himalayas, it is a vibrant tapestry of natural beauty and a haven for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. This UNESCO World Heritage Site, located in Uttarakhand, India, is renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, diverse flora, and serene ambience. My trip to this enchanting valley was nothing short of magical, filled with memorable anecdotes that made the journey truly unique.

However, it is not for the faint-hearted or those accustomed to leisurely travel. From the very start, you must brace yourself for adventure at every turn. From the food to the transport to accommodation, everything has a distinct local flavour. You quickly get to know the place and its people as you go. If you are visiting during the rainy season, which is the best time, be prepared for landslides, traffic jams, packed hotels, and sudden downpours that begin and stop at will. A raincoat comes in handy; an umbrella, however, flies away.

The journey to the *Valley of Flowers* began in Rishikesh, a bustling town known for its spiritual significance and adventure activities. After a night of rest, we set off early in the morning, winding our way through the scenic roads that led us to the small village of Govindghat. The drive itself was a prelude to the beauty that awaited us, with the Alaknanda River accompanying us on one side and towering mountains on the other. From Govindghat, we embarked on a 13-kilometre trek to Ghangaria, the base camp for the *Valley of Flowers*. The trail was a blend of steep ascents, gentle slopes, and narrow pathways, each offering a unique view of the surrounding landscapes. Along the way, we encountered cheerful pilgrims heading to Hemkund Sahib, a sacred Sikh shrine situated nearby. One particular moment that stood out during the trek was a sudden downpour. As we took shelter under a large rock, a local guide shared tales of how the valley transforms with each season, painting vivid pictures of snow-covered landscapes in winter and vibrant blossoms in summer. His stories, combined with the rhythmic sound of raindrops, added a mystical charm to our journey. Reaching Ghangaria, we spent the night at the Gurudwara, preparing ourselves for the main highlight of the trip. It is a

“
NESTLED IN THE HEART OF THE WESTERN HIMALAYAS, IT IS A VIBRANT TAPESTRY OF NATURAL BEAUTY AND A HAVEN FOR NATURE ENTHUSIASTS AND ADVENTURE SEEKERS. THIS UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE, LOCATED IN UTTARAKHAND, INDIA, IS RENOWNED FOR ITS BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES, DIVERSE FLORA, AND SERENE AMBIENCE
”



beautiful and humbling place where most travellers to the *Valley of Flowers* or Hemkund Sahib take rest. The hotels in town are modest and almost fully booked during the season. The next morning, we began the 4-kilometre trek to the *Valley of Flowers*. Some paperwork needs to be completed, and certain precautions must be taken, as everyone is required to return on the same day. There are no resting places, not even a tea shack, in the valley. As we entered the valley, the sight that greeted us was nothing short of spectacular. A vast expanse of colourful flowers stretched out before us, with hues of red, blue, yellow, and pink creating a natural mosaic. Walking through the valley, we encountered a variety of flowers, each with its own unique charm. From the delicate Brahma Kamal to the vibrant Blue Poppy, the valley was a botanist's dream. One of the most memorable moments was when we stumbled upon a group of rare Himalayan Monal pheasants, their iridescent feathers glistening in the sunlight. While the flowers were undoubtedly the stars of the valley, the fauna added an element of surprise and delight. We spotted a herd of Bharal, or blue sheep, grazing on a distant slope. Their graceful movements, against the backdrop of snow-capped peaks, created a postcard-worthy scene. Taking a break by a bubbling brook, we enjoyed a simple picnic of sandwiches and fruit. The sheer tranquillity of the place, with only the sound of the water and occasional bird calls, made it a perfect spot for reflection. In that moment of quietude, I truly appreciated the untouched beauty of the *Valley of Flowers*. As we made our way back to Ghangaria and eventually to Govindghat, I couldn't help but feel a deep sense of gratitude for the experience. The *Valley of Flowers* is not just a destination; it's a journey that immerses you in nature's splendour and leaves you with



memories that last a lifetime. The camaraderie with fellow trekkers, the tales of local guides, and the sheer beauty of the landscape all contribute to making it a one-of-a-kind adventure. The *Valley of Flowers* serves as a reminder of the incredible diversity and beauty that our planet holds. It calls us to explore, appreciate, and preserve these natural wonders for future



generations. If you ever find yourself yearning for an escape into nature's embrace, the *Valley of Flowers* awaits, ready to enchant and inspire. As I left from the *Valley of Flowers*, I realised it wasn't just the destination that left a lasting impression, but the journey itself, each step revealing nature's unspoiled beauty. It's a place that calls adventurers to return, with new tales waiting to be discovered on every visit.

DURING HOLI, MY MOM PREPARES LOVELY PURAN POLIS, AND EVERYONE IN MY FAMILY MAKES AN EXCEPTION IN THEIR DIET PLAN TO INCLUDE THIS DELICIOUS FOOD ITEM!
— SONALI BENDRE

Rose Café

A BLEND OF NOSTALGIA AND NEW CULINARY DELIGHTS

For anyone seeking a haven of timeless elegance and warmth, the newly opened *Rose Café* at Malviya Nagar's Eldeco Centre is a must-visit, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**



Nestled within the vibrant neighbourhood of Malviya Nagar, *Rose Café* has opened its doors at the *Eldeco Centre*, offering a delightful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city. With its charming vintage-inspired interiors, welcoming atmosphere, and a menu that celebrates home-style cooking with a Mediterranean twist, this beloved *New Delhi* eatery continues to create a space where time slows down, and cherished memories are made. Founded in 2012 by the mother-daughter duo *Sarita* and *Tarini Ahuja*, *Rose Café* first began its journey in the serene bylanes of *Saidulajab*. Now, with its new location in *Malviya Nagar*, the café retains its timeless charm while introducing a fresh and airy space where patrons can

unwind. The high ceilings, chandeliers, floor-to-ceiling windows, and distressed furniture create an ambience that is both captivating and comforting. Hand-painted murals, petal-patterned floors, and custom-made furniture add unique touches that evoke a sense of nostalgia and renewal, making every visit feel like a step back in time, without losing the comfort of contemporary style. At the core of *Rose Café's* philosophy is *Sarita* and *Tarini's* passion for home-style cooking and crafting joyful dining experiences. Their aim is not just to offer meals, but to create moments where guests can relax, connect, and feel at ease. Whether it's a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or an

all-day breakfast indulgence, the café's commitment to heartfelt hospitality ensures that every visit feels special. Even pets are welcomed with open arms, with the café's pet-friendly policy making it a perfect spot for furry companions to join in the fun. Owner *Sarita Ahuja* says, "Whether you're joining us for a quick bite, high tea, or a comforting dinner, we aim to make every visit special. We invite you to savour our home-style food, experience our hospitality, and become a part of our café's ongoing story." The café's décor also reflects the *Ahuja* family's personal history. Treasured knick-knacks passed down through generations are displayed thoughtfully throughout the space, blending seamlessly with more modern design elements to evoke the warmth of a familiar, lived-in home. This DIY ethos extends to the handcrafted details, from custom-designed chandeliers to hand-painted blackboards and rose accents, all contributing to the charm of the atmosphere.

Rose Café's menu is a delightful blend of classic comfort foods and new culinary offerings. Alongside long-loved dishes such as *spaghetti* and *meatballs*, *skinny pizzas*, and *bangers* and *mash*, the new location introduces exciting additions with a Mediterranean twist. Diners can indulge in savoury *churros*, made with parmesan and truffle for an irresistible blend of flavours, or savour the richness of *sun-dried tomato* and *pesto cream ravioli* served with burnt butter, adding a luxurious touch to an already beloved pasta dish. For those craving a taste of Lebanese cuisine, there are options like *hummus*

platters paired with warm *pita*, *falafel wraps* bursting with fresh vegetables, and roasted vegetable salads dressed in light, fragrant olive oil and herbs. These Mediterranean-inspired dishes complement the café's classic favourites, inviting diners to explore a range of flavours that are both comforting and adventurous. Mediterranean and Lebanese cuisines are known for their fresh, vibrant flavours and healthy ingredients. Rooted in the use of olive oil, fresh herbs, grains, and legumes, these cuisines emphasise simplicity and the natural taste of ingredients. Lebanese dishes often include staples like *hummus*, *falafel*, *tabbouleh*, and *baba ghanoush*, with generous use of garlic, lemon, and

aromatic spices. Mediterranean food, more broadly, features an array of *grilled vegetables*, *seafood*, *flatbreads*, and *flavourful dips*. Together, they offer a rich culinary tradition that balances light, wholesome fare with bold, satisfying tastes. *Rose Café* brings these to the heart of Delhi with its own improvisations. The food is, of course, served with a smile by warm staff, complementing the warmth of the place. Though new in *Malviya Nagar*, it is creating a lot of interest among people who relish exotic food. The café's all-day breakfast menu ensures that early risers and brunch enthusiasts can indulge in delights like berry compote-topped *French toast* or *creamy scrambled eggs* served with artisanal breads. Sweet treats like the signature *lemon cake*, *homemade gelatos*, and *chocolate chip cookies* remain menu staples, offering a familiar taste of comfort to loyal patrons. At *Rose Café*, the dining experience extends beyond just a meal—it's a chance to savour the beauty of the surroundings and lose track of time in a space that feels like an extension of one's own home. The café caters to every kind of visit, be it a relaxed high tea, a cosy lunch, or a romantic dinner date. The airy, light-filled environment invites guests to linger, enjoy the view through the floor-to-ceiling windows, and soak in the café's elegant yet homely ambience. The combination of vintage charm, Mediterranean flavours, and thoughtful hospitality sets it apart as a place where the simple joys of life are celebrated over delicious meals and comforting surroundings. Whether you're revisiting an old favourite or experiencing the café for the first time, *Rose Café* offers a dining experience that leaves you feeling refreshed, connected, and truly at home.



INDIA'S LARGEST FOOD FESTIVAL

The *Grub Fest*, India's largest food festival, made a grand return to Delhi at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. With an exciting blend of culinary delights and live entertainment, this year's event offered food enthusiasts a memorable experience, celebrating the vibrant food culture of India, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Delhi was alive with excitement as it welcomed *The Grub Fest*, India's largest food festival, back to the iconic Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. This year's festival promised a vibrant celebration of culinary diversity, live entertainment and community spirit, creating an unforgettable experience for food enthusiasts and families alike. Since its inception in 2015, *The Grub Fest* has evolved into a significant cultural phenomenon, expanding its reach across major cities, including Gurugram, Pune, Mumbai and Chandigarh. This year's edition proved to be the most ambitious yet, featuring over 100 stalls showcasing a diverse range of flavours from local street food to gourmet delights. Renowned restaurants such as *Indie QLA*, *Perilicious*, and *Leos Pizzeria* participated, presenting an array of dishes that delighted the taste buds of festival-goers. As attendees entered the festival grounds, they were



enveloped in a magical atmosphere enhanced by stunning decor, cascading flowers, twinkling fairy lights and art installations inviting exploration and engagement. The vibrant layout of the stalls was complemented by intoxicating aromas wafting through the air, promising culinary adventures at every turn. Music played a vital role in the festival, with an impressive lineup of live performances that entertained the crowd. The rhythmic beats and melodic tunes encouraged festival-goers to dance and sing along, fully immersing themselves in the experience. Families found ample opportunity to relax and bond



in the dedicated Picnic Park, a serene space equipped with cozy seating and interactive games for children. Meanwhile, the Beer Garden catered to adults, providing a charming setting where craft beer enthusiasts could sip refreshing brews while enjoying the lively entertainment. The festival

also featured themed booths and a Ferris wheel, ensuring there was no shortage of photo-worthy moments. Aman Kumar, the visionary behind *The Grub Fest*, expressed his passion for curating exceptional experiences that celebrate the rich culinary heritage of Delhi. His commitment to showcasing the city's diverse food culture was evident in the meticulous planning and execution of the event. The festival was not just a gathering; it was a celebration of the community, where people from all walks of life came together to savour, connect and enjoy. In a noteworthy parallel to *The Grub Fest*, *AVA Experience* had taken place earlier at The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa in Gulmarg, Kashmir. Speaking about the vision for the event, Samir Sehgal, Co-Founder of *AVA Experience*, shared, "Our vision for *AVA Experience* is to redefine India's music festival landscape with house music in Kashmir, creating community-

led experiences." The event aimed to offer a unique fusion of music and scenic beauty, setting a new benchmark for music festivals in India. Both *The Grub Fest* and *AVA Experience* demonstrated a shift towards innovative and engaging events that went beyond traditional formats. They reflected a desire for meaningful experiences that resonated deeply with audiences, highlighting the power of food, music and community to create lasting memories. As *The Grub Fest* unfolded in Delhi, attendees were treated to a weekend filled with an extraordinary array of flavours, live performances and vibrant interactions. This celebration showcased the best of India's culinary scene and created a sense of unity and joy, reminding everyone of the simple pleasures of good food and shared moments. The event solidified its place as a hallmark of the city's cultural calendar, setting the stage for future festivities that promise to delight and inspire.

CHEERS TO CULINARY CHAMPS!



BY TEAM AGENDA

The Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) held its 21st Annual Chef Awards at Hotel Ashok, coinciding with International Chefs Day. This prestigious event gathered esteemed chefs and industry leaders to recognise the exceptional contributions of culinary artists who have significantly impacted Indian cuisine on a global scale. Among the distinguished guests was *Nakul Anand*, former Executive Director of ITC Hotels, who presented awards to the night's winners. The presence of influential figures like *Chef Davinder Kumar*, President of the ICF and *Chef Vivek Saggur*, General Secretary, underscored the importance of the event in nurturing culinary talent. *Chef Kumar* expressed pride in showcasing the creativity and dedication of chefs, highlighting the event's role in inspiring future culinary professionals. This year's awards honoured 17 talented chefs across various categories, including the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award, which went to *Chef Sanjiv Mediratta*. Other winners included *Chef (Dr.) Gautam Chaudhry*, who received the Golden Hat Chef Award and *Chef Divyas Wadhwa*, who was awarded the Silver Hat Chef title. Such recognition



The event was marked by a spirit of camaraderie and competition, with 150 chefs participating in rigorous culinary challenges leading up to the awards. The ICF continues to play a vital role in promoting the culinary arts in India, offering a platform for chefs to connect, learn and innovate. As the evening concluded, it was clear that the 21st Annual Chef Awards not only celebrated culinary excellence but also reinforced the community's commitment to elevating Indian cuisine on the world stage.



SAFEGUARDING 'UNPROTECTED' CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INTACH

India's unprotected cultural heritage is vast and diverse, requiring active public participation for its preservation. Community engagement ensures the relevance and sustainability of these cultural assets

BY SUKHDEV SINGH

India, being a vast country with diverse populations, topography, and climate, and consequently, a rich cultural heritage, requires the active participation of its people to safeguard this heritage in various ways. Firstly, as genuine stakeholders, people should take ownership of it. Secondly, with public involvement, cultural heritage gains relevance in people's lives and becomes integrated into their everyday use and socio-economic activities. Thirdly, community participation ensures cost-effective and sustainable conservation. Lastly, it encourages local and authentic craftsmanship in its preservation, enriching the process with diverse knowledge resources based on geographical, cultural, linguistic, and religious variations.



Considering the immense diversity and long, disparate historical timeline that has shaped India's cultural imprints, its natural and human heritage cannot be confined to what is protected by the Central and State governments under the AMASR Act of 1958 (amended in 2010). The act provides for the protection and preservation of structures and sites of monumental value that are over 100 years old. These structures are primarily owned by the government and are preserved as abandoned monuments. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) oversees the care and conservation of monuments, sites, and remains of national importance, while State Departments of Archaeology and Museums manage monuments of state (regional) significance. Other structures are regulated under the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 (Rules 1973).

However, the scope of these acts is limited and costly. As a result, much of India's vast cultural heritage, which is under threat from pressures other than natural decay, remains unprotected. Since the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention, the understanding of cultural heritage has evolved significantly. It now includes a broader, people-centred approach, recognising that cultural heritage is not only about grand monuments but also encompasses everyday structures, such as common houses, shops, and other ordinary buildings, as well as the living traditions and environments that shape communities.

These cultural legacies, which form 'cultural landscapes' in the streets, markets, and avenues of old townships, are as valuable as monumental heritage but remain unprotected by any legal provisions and are under constant threat from insensitive urbanisation, modernisation, and development policies. Several initiatives have been introduced to safeguard this unprotected cultural heritage. These include the listing of sites, buildings, objects, and intangible systems for record, research, and conservation purposes; heritage walks to raise awareness and connect people to their own and others' cultural heritage; and heritage regulations by state governments and local bodies to create some legal provisions for safeguarding unprotected heritage. Listings serve as inventories for the identification, advocacy, and preservation of unprotected cultural heritage. These inventories



“ THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (ASI) OVERSEES THE CARE AND CONSERVATION OF MONUMENTS, SITES, AND REMAINS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE, WHILE STATE DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS MANAGE MONUMENTS OF STATE (REGIONAL) SIGNIFICANCE. OTHER STRUCTURES ARE REGULATED UNDER THE ANTIQUITIES AND ART TREASURE ACT, 1972 (RULES 1973) ”

can together form a National Register of Historic Properties for research and conservation action. Listed buildings may be graded and classified as Grade A, B, or C in descending order of importance, guiding decisions about conservation. Additionally, in modern cities, old townships displaying their existing architecture can be designated as 'Cultural Landscapes' or 'Heritage Zones', requiring sensitive planning within routine or comprehensive development initiatives. These landscapes can also be listed in the Master Plans of cities. To regulate development in such zones, state and local governments can pass heritage regulations that control interventions involving the modification of unprotected historical or old buildings and sites. To engage people with their cultural heritage,

heritage walks can offer a meaningful path forward. These walks could be made more popular by improving civic amenities and enhancing the visual appeal of heritage areas by reducing the clutter of advertising boards, electric and internet cables, and satellite dish wiring. Heritage walks and conservation projects would also boost the local economy by generating employment in crafts, local shops, and the service sector. This concept of 'living heritage' holds a symbiotic relationship with its architectural and natural surroundings. While protected monuments and archaeological sites must be conserved with minimal intervention as pure and true testaments to the past, other significant architectural structures and sites can be preserved with more flexible interventions, reclaiming

their meaning, relevance, and role as markers of the past within the present. In this way, the 'past' and 'present' are not seen as separate entities but as part of a continuous, evolving timeline. This approach supports 'living heritage' models in the form of heritage lanes, heritage trails, or zones of individual heritage structures. Separating cultural heritage from nature is impractical and artificial, as human culture depends on nature—not only using its elements, such as sand, soil, metals, and plants, but also incorporating natural systems, designs, and processes, like altering materials, colouring them, and varying patterns. This understanding of cultural heritage recognises its continuity and relevance through systemic arrangements. Established in 1984, the Indian

National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has developed into a think tank and practical resource for the protection of unprotected cultural heritage. INTACH is tasked with engaging the people of India in this effort by enrolling citizens as members while also engaging skilled human resources. INTACH has been cataloguing buildings over 50 years old that have architectural, historical, archaeological, or aesthetic value, organising heritage walks, and advocating for heritage regulations. It works in partnership with other organisations and individuals, complementing rather than competing with them.

Professor (Retd) SUKHDEV SINGH
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
Vice-Chairman, Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage, New Delhi



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week presents an excellent opportunity to channel your focus into your professional endeavors and see substantial results. You are currently harmonized in your physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, radiating an aura of positivity. However, enhancing your communication skills could prove beneficial. Aim to be precise and persuasive in your interactions, as your ability to inspire others through your actions and words will be particularly impactful. Exercise caution, as not everyone may appreciate your successes; some might even attempt to undermine your efforts. Despite the competitive environment, your dynamic energy and resilience will help you overcome any negativity. Success hinges on your dedication—avoid overconfidence and hasty decisions. Health should not be overlooked; maintaining a well-regulated lifestyle with proper nutrition and exercise is crucial.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Aquamarine
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week, your natural leadership shines as you focus on humanitarian efforts, setting personal ambitions aside. A significant opportunity may arise, possibly involving a pivotal job role or an invitation for a high-responsibility position. Maintain your core principles and unique perspective throughout. Embrace a proactive and supportive approach to foster better relationships both professionally and personally. Recognize the counterproductive nature of anger; mastering your responses can enhance communication and prevent conflicts. Rest assured, any challenges are only temporary, and you will soon regain control. Towards the week's end, you might encounter some disruptive influences prompting an emotional response. Remember, this is not the time for dejection or prolonged disappointment. Persistence and faith are your allies in navigating through this period.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Mustard
Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week brings a wave of prosperity, enhancing your financial well-being. Expect an uptick in your financial reserves, signaling a phase of economic growth and stability. Your interactions with family and friends will be harmonious, enhancing your personal connections. The focus on financial matters might surprise you at times, but it will also bring opportunities for enjoyment and leisure. You'll find yourself adept at juggling your responsibilities with personal pleasures, maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Engage with peers globally through digital platforms, embracing an openness about your life choices, uninhibited by familial expectations. Travel may be on the agenda to fulfill professional obligations. However, as the week progresses, you might find yourself grappling with a newfound discipline that feels restrictive, challenging your ability to balance work with fun.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Tangerine
Lucky day Monday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, it's crucial to steer clear of pessimistic thinking as feelings of sadness or overwhelm might make it difficult to feel revitalized. Numerous concerns, particularly about your professional life, may be weighing on your mind. Now is a good moment to reflect on whether you have been fair and diligent in your efforts. If the answer is affirmative, expect to see positive outcomes soon. You'll find that your business gains a solid foundation, and collaborations flourish due to shared goals and effective teamwork. Engaging in both imaginative and logical tasks will prove to be fruitful. As the week closes, a work-related trip appears likely. This journey will not only be enjoyable but also inspire you to set and pursue a new, fruitful objective.

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Wednesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week promises significant advancements in your life, including potential travel or important communications that could lead to exciting contracts or connections. Expect unexpected opportunities that could bring substantial benefits. Those who are meticulous and methodical will find themselves particularly well-positioned to capitalize on these prospects. Your quick wit and creative spirit are your greatest assets, driving you to pursue innovative endeavors that could surprise and impress those around you. Nothing seems to stand in your way as you move towards your well-deserved rewards. Additionally, you might find joy in personal celebrations, possibly welcoming a new addition to the family. Embrace this period of plentiful blessings with open arms, and be ready to embrace each moment as a step towards even greater successes.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Embracing change and letting go of old beliefs will benefit you greatly. It's a time for healing, where forgiveness plays a crucial role in moving forward. Reflecting on life with kindness and understanding will guide you through the week. Challenges in relationships and a sense of discontent may arise, signaling a significant transformation ahead. Embrace this shift, leaving outdated traditions behind and welcoming new possibilities. This week is filled with dynamic energies that might unsettle you. To find balance, engage in activities that nourish your soul like gardening, painting, or playing music. If you find yourself at a standstill, immerse yourself in creative endeavors and trust in the divine timing. Tensions might be apparent in your actions and interactions, but seeking solace in spiritual practices can provide comfort and peace.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Emerald
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

Self-reflection is a powerful method for gaining deeper insights. Although you might feel that a long-cherished goal has eluded you, it's important to recognize that sometimes external circumstances may not align favorably. Persistence is crucial, but so is tuning into your inner guidance and fostering positive interactions. This week, you may find that despite your efforts, the outcomes you're hoping for remain elusive. You might entertain the thought of launching a new venture, yet uncertainty about this path could leave you hesitant. However, clarity will emerge, helping you feel more settled as the week progresses. You're mastering the art of maintaining equilibrium in both professional and personal spheres, and managing your finances wisely.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Slate Gray
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week is set to bring significant financial gains, potentially through unexpected sources. It's crucial to engage in thoughtful discussions with elder family members to maintain harmony. Focusing on proactive measures rather than reactive responses will guide you well during this time. Midweek, it's important to address specific concerns with your business or life partner, fostering a shared commitment to common goals. Decisions made now are likely to yield positive outcomes in the future. Expect a fresh burst of inspiration that could influence your thinking. Trusting your instincts will prove essential in reaching sound conclusions. Some may embark on new enterprises or take on roles that come with substantial responsibilities, marking a period of growth and initiative.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Lilac
Lucky day Saturday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week begins on an upbeat note, filled with the promise of travels, special gatherings, and festive moments. You might find yourself participating in sacred ceremonies or reconnecting with family members from your past. Expect opportunities to journey by air, signaling a period of active engagement and heartfelt pursuits. You may feel an urge to enhance your appearance, making it a good time to indulge in self-care such as spa treatments or wellness sessions. A leisurely stroll outdoors, embracing the natural world, will offer a refreshing boost to your spirits. Health-wise, longstanding ailments may show signs of improvement, bringing a sense of relief and renewal. Legal matters that have been a persistent concern are poised to resolve favorably. Savor these positive developments, though remain prepared for minor challenges—life's way of maintaining balance.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Charcoal
Lucky day Tuesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

You find yourself deeply entangled in your thoughts, facing restlessness and a sense of being stuck. Recent events might have unfolded rapidly and unexpectedly, leading to a dip in self-assurance and a strain in your spiritual beliefs. At home, minor disagreements, differing viewpoints, or feelings of betrayal in relationships may arise, contributing to emotional unrest. However, it's essential to realize that this period of discomfort is only temporary. Instead of spending nights awake, remember that you still hold the potential to steer through these challenges effectively. Your emotional response may cloud your recognition of the remaining possibilities and opportunities. Soon, positive developments from afar will bring joy and reassurance. As the week concludes, you'll find clarity and direction, either spiritually or materially. Keep faith and let go of the past.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Plum
Lucky day Monday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Those with a giving nature are in a period where their generosity shines, especially when it comes to taking on various responsibilities with ease. You might find yourself supporting a friend or relative financially, and it seems to bring you joy. Now is an opportune time for making wise investments and engaging in monetary exchanges. Acts of kindness towards those in need will enrich your spirit, guiding you along a path filled with deeper spiritual connections. Midweek could bring romantic opportunities, especially for those who are currently single, enhancing chances to connect deeply with someone special. Established relationships are likely to experience strengthened bonds. Emotional satisfaction will be a highlight of your week. However, towards the weekend, seeking balance in your tasks and overall approach will be crucial.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Ivory
Lucky day Sunday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Guidance from mentors will stabilize your emotional fluctuations this week. Initially, you might find yourself feeling disheartened, as your efforts seem to yield no results. Challenges in your projects, well-being, and unforeseen setbacks may cause concern. However, by midweek, you will discover signs of encouragement and moments that uplift your spirits. You'll harness your ideas into creative pursuits successfully. Joy also comes through interactions with young ones. You might contemplate initiating a new venture, though financial constraints could pose a dilemma. Consider partnerships or financial assistance, which could come from friends or family, to bridge these gaps. Feeling inspired, you'll aim higher in your aspirations. Engaging with spiritual practices will bring clarity and emotional satisfaction, enhancing your innate compassion and creativity, leading to rewarding outcomes.

Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour White
Lucky day Friday

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Is boredom a blessing or a curse?

There are 365 days in a year and there are so many years in your life. If for one or two days you feel you are wasted, life is a failure, it's okay, never mind!

GURUSPEAK



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
Spiritual Guru

When life feels dull, there's this magical moment where everything becomes lively. You can repeat the same thing over and over, and it won't bother you

IN an ocean, the waves keep coming non-stop, it doesn't get boring! Birds sing the same song, every morning, all their life, they don't get bored! It is only human beings who get bored! 'Oh! Once again the same thing.' And why do you get bored? It is because of memory. You remember whatever you have done before, so you get bored. Memory is both a blessing and a curse. It is because you get bored that you feel the need to look for something different, something new, and that is how creativity comes up; you look for the ultimate. Otherwise, you could have remained like an animal doing the same thing every day. But, you can't do it because you get bored!

So, in that sense, boredom is a blessing. Because you get bored, you move on, you look forward, you become a seeker and you rise higher. At the same time, boredom is also a curse because it doesn't

allow you to be centred and steady in one place. So your mind aimlessly keeps jumping from one place to another. Because you get bored of everything, you can't enjoy anything. There are two different paths that boredom leads you to. Boredom is a blessing when it leads you to wisdom. Boredom is a curse when it leads you to frustration and depression. Because you are bored, you can't enjoy it, and when you can't enjoy it you get depressed and frustrated. Or, because you are bored you wake up and begin with a quest.

When life feels dull, there's this magical moment where everything becomes lively. You can repeat the same thing over and over, and it won't bother you. It's like finding a spring of life. Just let go of the past, be like a carefree child, and every moment becomes priceless.

You move ahead and you look into the Self which is fresh all the



time! The Self is ever new. Because you are bored with the ephemeral, the surface, you go deep into the Self. So boredom is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because it takes you away from the routine monotonous life, makes you aware and brings life into you.

And it is a curse because it doesn't let you stabilize. People who are in love don't get bored. The heart knows no boredom. The head knows boredom.

In life both are essential, the heart and the head. If you are only

in the heart, it is no good. And if you are only stuck in the head, that is also no good. Balancing both is Yoga. Spirituality is balancing the heart and head together. Anyone who feels that they are a failure, just wake up! So what?! Life is eternal.

Meditation acts like a bridge connecting your head and heart. Take a few moments to sit down, be open to boredom, and you'll effortlessly move into a deep meditative state. Otherwise, that boredom might just lead you to sleep. It's a choice — either you sleep, become more sluggish, or you seize the opportunity of boredom to delve into a deep meditation.

There are 365 days in a year and there are so many years in your life. If for one or two days you feel you are wasted, life is a failure, it's okay, never mind!

On a full moon, if it is cloudy and the light cannot shine on the Earth, the moon does not get

unset. If on one full moon night, you cannot see the moon rising, so what? The moon is still there. Like that, inside you there is potential, there is divinity which is so complete. If it has not come to the surface in one day, never mind! You have all the great qualities. If some do not exhibit on a particular day, never mind.

Don't blame yourself, don't analyze yourself too much. We start analyzing ourselves too much; to the extent that we feel upset and down. We are so hard on ourselves. I am saying this to those who feel bad about themselves. NEVER MIND, WAKE UP! Never mind if these many years are wasted. The future is bright and there is still so much for you to do. All regrets happen only when you are looking at the past. If you are walking and your head is turned backwards, then that is called regret. Turn your head and look forward, and you will see the future is always bright.