



TERROR RETURNS TO KASHMIR, TOURISTS MASSACRED

AFTER NEARLY FOUR DECADES, PAHALGAM CARNAGE RIPS APART SEMBLANCE OF NORMALCY

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Srinagar

At least 26 tourists, holidaying in the famous tourist hotspot of Pahalgam in the Kashmir valley, were killed and several others were injured when a group of heavily armed terrorists, dressed in combat uniform, opened indiscriminate fire on them after verifying their religious identities on Tuesday afternoon.

After the February 14, 2019, Pulwama attack on a CRPF convoy, in which 40 jawans were martyred, Tuesday afternoon's attack is the most provocative strike on Indian soil by the terrorists sheltered by their Pakistan-based handlers operating from across the Line of Control.

The tensions between India and Pakistan may further escalate as the attack comes close on the heels of recent posturing by the Pakistan Army Chief, Asim Munir, on Kashmir. Last week, India rubbished Munir's remarks describing Kashmir as the "jugular vein" of Pakistan and said Islamabad's only link with Jammu and Kashmir is the vacation of illegally occupied parts of the union territory.

Condemning the terror attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that those behind the heinous act will be brought to justice. PM Modi also directed Home Minister Amit Shah to visit the attack site in Pahalgam.

In a post on X, the prime minister said, "They (terrorists) will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable, and it will get even stronger."

The attack also coincided with the first official visit of US Vice President JD Vance to India.

According to eyewitness reports, the 'gruesome' attack took place around 1430hrs when a large number of tourists, after taking horse rides and absorbing themselves in the pristine beauty of Kashmir valley, were relaxing and breaking bread with their loved ones in the picturesque Baisaran meadow, half-an-hour trek from Pahalgam.



Security personnel rushing to the spot after terrorists attacked a group of tourists at Pahalgam, in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, April 22 (left); Injured being shifted to a hospital in Anantnag district (right)



PTI

of the attack survivors claimed that while they were having snacks, an armed man, dressed in a combat uniform, arrived and sprayed bullets at them after verifying the religious identities of the tourists present. Tourists, with their heads punctured with bullets, were also seen writhing in pain in the picturesque meadow of Baisaran.

As gunshots rang out, there was panic, and tourists ran for cover, but there was no place to hide in the wide, open space, said another woman tourist.

It appears the terror attack was broadly aimed at shattering the peace prevailing in the Valley at a time when tourist footfall was skyrocketing and common Kashmiris were reaping rich dividends of peace after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A. In 2023, 2,11,80,011 tourists visited J and K, and in 2024, the number increased to 2,35,90,081.

Since March 26, over 8.25 lakh tourists

CHRONOLOGY OF RECENT TERROR ATTACKS

- **August 14, 2024:** Doda encounter (one officer, one terrorist killed)
- **August 10, 2024:** Anantnag encounter (four jawans killed and four injured)
- **July 27, 2024:** Kupwara encounter (one security personnel killed)
- **July 22 2024:** Rajouri encounter (one security personnel injured)
- **July 15, 2024:** Doda encounter (four soldiers, one policeman killed)
- **July 9, 2024:** Kathua encounter (five jawans killed)
- **June 13, 2024:** Gandoh encounter (one policeman injured)
- **June 12 2024:** Chattergala encounter (one terrorist killed)
- **June 9, 2024:** Reasi terror attack (nine pilgrims killed)

have visited Asia's largest tulip garden in Srinagar to see the blooming flower carpet of 17 lakh tulips of 74 varieties.

Tourists camping in Pahalgam vacated their hotel rooms in the aftermath of the gruesome terror attack. The local authorities facilitated their safe travels to instill confidence among them.

The terror attack ahead of the beginning of the Amarnath yatra is bound to affect the tourist season in the coming weeks.

The entire district administration and police force were mobilised and ambulances pressed into service. A chopper also helped evacuate those injured.

Till late Tuesday evening, the exact number of tourists killed in the terror attack was not confirmed by the police. The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we have seen directed at civilians in recent years".

"I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The per-

petrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased," he said.

Before heading to Srinagar, Union Home Minister Amit Shah briefed the prime minister, who is on a visit to Saudi Arabia, said he was leaving for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all agencies.

"Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," Shah said in a post on X.

Amit Shah also chaired a meeting at his home in Delhi, which was attended by Intelligence Bureau Chief Tapan Deka and Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, the sources said. CRPF chief Gyanendra Pratap Singh, J and K Director General of

Police Nalin Prabhatand some Army officials also joined the meeting through video conferencing. Mr Shah also spoke to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, they added.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in a post on X said Deeply anguished by the news of terrorist attack in Pahalgam (Jammu and Kashmir). This dastardly attack on innocent civilians is an act of cowardice and highly reprehensible. My thoughts and prayers are with the innocent victims and their families.

Meanwhile, a massive anti-terrorist operation has been launched to hunt down the assailants, and security forces have fanned out in all directions.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who accompanied the Home Minister in a special flight from New Delhi Tuesday, said, "I strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam. I assure the people that those behind this despicable attack will not go unpunished."

The ByStander



ECI objects to Rahul's swipe on poll body in US

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Taking exception to Leader of Opposition and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent remarks about poll process in the country, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday rejected his allegations, saying any misinformation being spread, by anyone, is not only a sign of disrespect towards law, but also brings disrepute to the thousands of representatives appointed by their own political party and demotivates lakhs of election staff who work untiringly and transparently during elections.

"After any unfavourable verdict by the voters, trying to defame the Election Commission by saying that it is compromised is completely absurd. The entire nation is aware that each election process

including the preparation of electoral rolls, polling and counting etc. are all held by Government staff and that too in the presence of authorised representatives formally appointed by Political Parties/ Candidates from polling station upto constituency level," the ECI said.

On Monday, Rahul alleged in Boston, US, that, in simple terms, more people voted in the Maharashtra Assembly election than there were adults in the state. "The Election Commission gave us a voting figure for 1730hrs, and between 1730hrs and 1930 hrs, 65 lakh voters voted. This is physically impossible. For a voter to vote, it takes approximately three minutes and, if you do the math, it would mean that there were lines of voters till 0200hrs but this did not happen," he had said.

VP escalates attack on SC after BJP

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ New Delhi

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday hit out at his critics for questioning his remarks on a recent Supreme Court order, asserting that every word spoken by a Constitutional functionary is guided by supreme national interest. He also asserted that Parliament is supreme.

This is the third of its kind remarks in recent times questioning the role and supremacy of judiciary and legislative which includes twice by the Presiding officer of Rajya Sabha and certain BJP leaders including vocal Lok Sabha MP Nishikant Dubey. All faced severe criticism by the Opposition parties while BJP chief J P Nadda distancing itself over the controversial remarks by party members which also led slamming by the legal experts. In a related development, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Tuesday said



everything the Supreme court said was consistent with the country's constitutional values and guided by national interest.

Sibal's remarks in a social media post came soon after Dhankhar asserted that every word spoken by a constitutional functionary was guided by supreme national interest.

Addressing a Delhi University event, Dhankhar also said efforts of forces working against the country to tarnish and run down institutions should be neutralised, "be it that of the presidency".

Asserting that Parliament is supreme, Dhankhar said, "There is no visualisation in the Constitution of any authority above Parliament. Parliament is supreme... Let me tell you, it is as supreme as every individual in the country".

He also underscored that there should be "no doubt" that the Constitution is for the people and its repository of safeguarding is that of the elected representatives. "They are the ultimate masters as to what the Constitution's content will be," he said.

DDA notice to Signature Apartment residents

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has served a notice asking residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar to vacate their flats at the earliest, as the deadline for evacuation, March 23, has passed.

An e-tender for its demolition was issued on March 17, shortly after the authority released standard operating procedures for the residents and the

Interestingly, residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar are caught in a financial bind as they await rent compensation from the Delhi Development Authority

Resident Welfare Association (RWA) to coordinate the evacuation. In the notice dated April 15, the DDA stated, "The high court had mandated that all occupants vacate their flats between December 23, 2024 and March 23, 2025. That period has now lapsed." The DDA urged residents to vacate their flats at the earliest for their safety and to allow for the demolition and reconstruction of the building. It has asked the RWA to coordinate with all residents for a timely evacuation. It has claimed that information on the reconstruction schedule and process for compensation will be shared in due course.

The authority also stated that it is committed to complying with the court's

directive regarding rent assistance, although it plans to appeal certain aspects of the ruling. The DDA had classified the 336-flat residential complex as a "dangerous building" due to structural safety concerns. The apartment complex, declared unfit for habitation by an IIT Delhi report in 2022, was ordered in January 2023 by the lieutenant governor to be vacated and rebuilt. However, residents claim that despite months of waiting, no concrete action has been taken. Many have already vacated, while others remain trapped in deteriorating buildings.

Many families are struggling to relocate without the promised financial aid, deepening their uncertainty. Interestingly, residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar are caught in a financial bind as they await rent compensation from the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), even as the agency moves ahead with demolition plans for their structurally unsafe homes.

RWA president Amrendra Singh Rakesh said 111 residents have already vacated their flats but have not received the promised rent compensation.

"Residents were assured of financial aid once they moved out. But even after 111 families vacated, no payments have been made," Rakesh said. He added that the delay has left residents uncertain about whether they will receive the promised compensation. For many, the uncertainty surrounding the payments is preventing them from moving out. One of the resident, who still resides in the complex, is reluctant to vacate without a clear guarantee of financial support.

A Royal wedding: British MP ties knot in desi style

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Lucknow

In an age when many couples opt for picturesque weddings in the Alps or the Amalfi Coast, a British MP returned to his roots with an emotional, culturally rich celebration that unfolded in the heart of Uttar Pradesh.

Navendu Prabhat Mishra, 36, a two-time elected Labour Party Member of Parliament from Stockport in the United Kingdom, tied the knot with Garima Tiwari of Bhopal in a spectacular Sanatan-style wedding in Lucknow on Sunday.

From the earthy fragrance of turmeric during the haldi ceremony to the soulful beats of dhol echoing through a five-star hotel in Ansal Golf City, everything about the wedding exuded the charm of a quintessential Indian celebration.

But what made it even more special was the groom himself—a rising British politician, clad in a cream-colored sherwani, touching the feet of elders, offering folded-hand greetings to guests, and joining the pheras with a sincerity that moved many to tears.

"This is not just a wedding. It is a celebration of heritage. It is rare to see someone who has achieved so much internationally come back and honour his roots in such a heartfelt way," said Arvind Tiwari, a relative of the bride.

Navendu Mishra, who moved to the UK from Mumbai in 2003 and has since become a prominent voice for the Indian diaspora in British politics, insisted on celebrating his marriage in India, not just

for nostalgia, but to reconnect with family, tradition, and home.

"Weddings are deeply personal. My parents always wanted to celebrate it here, amidst family, culture, and tradition. Lucknow felt right—it is close to where we belong. We had guests from our village, family members I had not seen in years. If we had done this in London or Stockport, it would have lacked that soul. What happened here was beyond my imagination," Mishra said, visibly emotional after the wedding rituals.

The bride, Garima Tiwari, hailing from Bhopal but originally from Deoria district in Uttar Pradesh, looked radiant in lehenga, complimenting the traditional grandeur of the ceremony. A banker by training and an alumna of a Glasgow university, Garima met Navendu through family connections, and their bond grew stronger over shared values and cultural sensibilities.

"Despite being born and raised miles apart, they both have strong emotional ties to their roots. This wedding is proof that no matter how far you go, the pull of home is eternal," said Nilendra Pandey, Navendu's maternal uncle.

Garima's father, Harendra Tiwari, a retired officer from the Horticulture Department in Madhya Pradesh, called the wedding "a moment of pride for both families and a message to younger generations about the timelessness of our traditions."

As celebrations unfolded, the venue saw an eclectic gathering of dignitaries and loved ones.

Women outshine men in UPSC examination results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Shakti Dubey has topped the civil services examination 2024, with Harshita Goyal and Dongre Archit Parag getting the second and third ranks, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) announced on Tuesday.

Topper Dubey holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry from the University of Allahabad. She qualified for the examination with political science and international relations as her optional subject, the commission said in a statement.

Goyal has a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the MS University of Baroda. She qualified for the exam with political science and international relations as her optional subject.

Parag, a Bachelor of Technology graduate in electrical and electronics engineering from Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Tamil Nadu, had philosophy as his optional subject, according to the civil services exam results declared by the UPSC.

Shah Margi Chirag, who has a Bachelor of Engineering degree in computer engineering from Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad, secured the fourth rank with sociology as her optional subject. Aakash Garg, who has a Bachelor of Technology degree in computer science from the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi, got the fifth rank with sociology as his optional subject.

The top five successful candidates comprise three women and two men.

The civil services examination is con-

ducted annually in three stages — preliminary, main and interview — by the UPSC to select officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

The civil services (preliminary) examination 2024 was conducted on June 16 last year. A total of 9,92,599 candidates applied for this examination, out of which 5,83,213 candidates actually

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appeared in the test.

A total of 14,627 candidates qualified for appearance in the written (main) examination, which was held in September 2024. Out of these, 2,845 candidates qualified for the personality test or interview, which were held between January 7 and April 17 this year.

Of them, 1,009 candidates — 725 men and 284 women — have been recommended by the UPSC for appointment to various services.

Out of the total successful candidates, 335 are from the general category, 109 from the economically weaker sections, 318 from other backward classes, 160 from scheduled castes and 87 from scheduled tribes, according to a statement issued by the commission.



ED action in National Herald case BJP's political vendetta: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Senior Congress leader Udit Raj said that the Congress will expose the politics of lies and vendetta in the National Herald case. He said that the case is a desperate attempt by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party to divert the attention of the people from the real issues and to insult the national heritage.

Addressing the media at the State headquarters of the Congress here on Tuesday, Raj alleged the chargesheet

Mumbai, Lucknow, Patna and Indore but these properties, barring Lucknow, are under lease, Raj said that the Congress party gave a loan of Rs 90 crore in 100 small installments from 2002 to 2011 for payment of salaries of the employees because of the poor financial condition of the newspaper. He said that the Congress supported National Herald as it believes that it is an organisation which represents the ideology of the



filed by the Enforcement Directorate is a political conspiracy. He said that it is unfortunate that the accusations of money laundering have been made in such a case where a transaction of not even a single paisa was made. It is normal practice to convert debt into equity to make the balances sheet debt free.

He said that the National Herald was founded under Associated Journals Limited (AJL) company in 1937 by PD Tandon, Acharya Narendra Dev and RA Kidwai along with Jawahar Lal Nehru. The British felt threatened by the newspaper due to which they banned it from 1942 to 1945. The AJL has immovable assets in six cities- Delhi, Panchkula,

party. In order to revive the AJL, it was restructured in 2010 and Young Indian was constituted as a non-profit earning company. The then Congress president Sonia Gandhi, late Motilal Vohra, late Oscar Fernandez and Rahul Gandhi were the shareholders while Sam Pitroda and Suman Dubey were not shareholder directors. The debt of Rs 90 crore of the AJL was converted into equity in view of its poor financial condition.

The Congress leader said that the claim of BJP that AJL the total value of AJL is Rs 5,000 crore is a bundle of lies and the fact is that the Income Tax department has valued the properties of AJL at Rs 413 crore.

USERC observes Earth Day through virtual lecture program

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

To mark the Earth Day, Uttarakhand Science Education and Research Centre (USERC) hosted a virtual lecture programme for the students studying in various schools of the State.

While presiding over the programme, the USERC director Anita Rawat said that



the best way to protect the earth lay through connecting themselves with the science-based traditions in vogue here since ancient times. She suggested a holistic approach meant to protect the earth as well as plants, animals and humans living on it. Further, she stressed on adoption of a lifestyle based on love for nature.

An USERC scientist Bhavatosh Sharma explained the conservation of the five elements of nature as well as energy conservation in detail to the students through a power-point presentation. Over 150 students and teachers from 25 schools participated in the programme.

Uttarakhand Sanskrit University VC meets governor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Uttarakhand Sanskrit University vice chancellor Dinesh Chandra Shastri met governor lieutenant general (ret'd) Gurmeet Singh and informed him about the work being done by the university under the 'one university-one research project'. He also presented a research book to the governor. The VC informed that the university has done research on the topic "Restoration of culture and Indian knowledge system: in the context of Uttarakhand State".

Shastri said that through the research, the difference between our pilgrimage and tourism has been clarified, and a code of conduct described in the scriptures has been prepared to maintain the dignity of the pilgrimage centres. He said that due to ignorance of this difference, the purity of the holy pilgrimage sites is being affected, causing environmental, social and natural problems. Using technology, a QR code has also been given in this book, through which information about the code of conduct can be obtained on YouTube.

Shastri said that code of conduct is very important for pilgrims to maintain the dignity of pilgrimage places. He said that according to the scriptures, faith and restraint have special importance during pilgrimage.

He said that the pilgrim should meditate on the deity while keeping control over the mind and senses and should keep the company of sages and teachers. The on



foot journey to the pilgrimage has been called the ultimate penance, Swa-adhyaya (self study), tapasya, evening worship and havan have been described as an integral part of the journey. Keeping restraint in food and living habits, being contented and self-reliant, speaking the truth and having a feeling of friendship, non-violence and respect towards all creatures have also been described as necessary during the journey.

He said that the research also clarifies what things should be avoided during pilgrimage. According to the scriptures, consumption of meat, alcohol and intoxicants is completely prohibited during pilgrimage. Taking donations at pilgrimages, keeping the idea of untouchability in pilgrimages, wearing clothes contrary to dignity, washing clothes in the water of the pilgrimage and crossing over to the other side by swimming are considered inappropriate. Appreciating the research work done by the university, the Governor said that this effort will not only help in the promotion of our ancient knowledge system and culture, but is also useful in maintaining the dignity of pilgrimage sites and strengthening environmental balance. He said that information about the pilgrimage code of conduct should reach as many people as possible.

BIS hosts seminar on industry sensitisation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KASHIPUR

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) organised the 'Industry Sensitisation Programme and Standard Manthan' in collaboration with the Kumaun Garhwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KGCCI) in which the leading industrialists of the region, especially the entrepreneurs associated with the plywood and wood-based panel product sector, participated. Among the dignitaries present was the former Union minister and MP, Ajay Bhatt and the director, BIS Dehradun, Saurabh Tiwari.

Inaugurating the programme, KGCCI president Ashok Bansal said that such programmes act as a bridge between the industry and the government. He urged the entrepreneurs to adopt the quality standards set by BIS and prepare their products for global competition.



Devbhumi officially mourns Catholic pontiff's demise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

In accordance with directives from the Central government, the State government declared a two-day State mourning on April 22 and 23 following the demise of Pope Francis.

The officials informed that during the mourning period, the national flag will be flown at half-mast at all government insti-

tutions and establishments. Additionally, there will be no government entertainment programmes organised in the State during this period. Apart from this, on the day of the funeral, state mourning will continue and the national flag will again be flown at half-mast throughout the day at government venues.

UVSP to conduct improvement examination for students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Uttarakhand Vidyalayi Shiksha Parishad (UVSP) is expected to initiate the registration process for the improvement examinations for classes X and XII for the year 2025 by the end of April. The UVSP released the results for the class X and class XII

achieve good marks or have failed in a specific subject should not be concerned. They will have the opportunity to enhance their scores by participating in an improvement examination. He said that the registration process for these improvement exams is anticipated to begin by the end of April, after which students will be able to fill out their applications. According to him, students in class X who have failed in two subjects are liable to give improvement examinations, while in class XII, students



board examinations on April 19. This year in class X, 90.77 per cent of students passed, with a passing rate of 88.20 per cent for boys and 93.25 per cent for girls. In class XII, 83.23 per cent of students successfully cleared the exam with boys achieving a passing percentage of 80.10 per cent and girls 86.20 per cent. Further, students who did not achieve satisfactory marks or failed in specific subjects have another opportunity available through the UVSP.

Regarding this, the secretary of the UVSP Vinod Simalti stated that students who have either struggled to

who failed in one subject will give improvement examinations. Subsequently, the improvement examinations will take place in July, and the results are expected to be announced in August, he said.

He further added that there has been a noticeable improvement in student results this time. Prior to the start of the board examinations, teachers received training with model test papers and subsequently provided their students with guidance based on this training. This initiative has contributed to an increase in the pass percentage of students in the year 2025.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखों अनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम किरनवती देवी के रूप में दर्ज है, सही नाम किरनवती आधार नं. 325103331254 M/o JC-344107N सुबेदार विवेक कुमार, गांव- नूरपुर, पोस्ट- सिकंदरपुर काकोड़ी, तह- हापुड़, जिला- हापुड़, यूपी -245101 है।

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखों अनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम किशन सिंह दर्ज है, सही नाम किशन सिंह बिष्ट आधार नं. 616127013972 F/o आर्मी नं. 18006046N नायक सुबोध सिंह, जोशीमठ, चमोली, जोशीमठ, उत्तराखंड - 246443 है

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform that Original Sale Deed No. 5660 registered in the name of Late Sh. Ram Swarup Sharma S/o Late Chanan Ram R/o- 69/7/69/1+2 Hakikat Rai Nagar, Mannuganj, Dehradun has been lost. Anyone finds it please contact :

Subhash Chandra Sharma S/o Late Ramswarup Sharma R/o- 69, Hakikat Rai Nagar, Mannuganj, Dehradun Presently R/o- G/1, 178 Indra Enclave, Sector 21D, Faridabad, Haryana. Mob.: 9953082108

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परिशिष्ट "अ"

8वीं वाहिनी, भारत तिब्बत सीमा पुलिस बल
गौचर, जिला-चमोली (उत्तराखण्ड)-246429
"नीलामी सूचना"

8वीं वाहिनी, भारत तिब्बत सीमा पुलिस बल, गौचर, जिला-चमोली (उत्तराखण्ड) द्वारा दिनांक 29.04.2025 को प्रातः 1000 बजे वाहिनी कैम्प परिसर में अनुपयोगी साजो-सामान (जैसे क्लोदिंग / चमड़ा, टैण्ट, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक एण्ड इलेक्ट्रिक, फर्नीचर / बूडन, प्लास्टिक एवं रबर एवं विविध वस्तुओं) की सार्वजनिक नीलामी की जानी है।

नीलामी की शर्तों:-

- सार्वजनिक नीलामी दिनांक-24.04.2025 को प्रातः 1000 बजे की जायेगी, सामान का निरीक्षण उसी दिन 0900 से 1000 बजे तक कैम्प परिसर में ही किया जायेगा।
- बोली दाता को बोली शुरू होने से पूर्व घरोहर राशि जमानत के तौर पर रु-5000/- जमा करानी होगी, जो उसी दिन नीलामी के पश्चात वापस कर दिये जायेंगे।
- नीलामी के लिये अन्तिम बोली दाता को हथौड़ा गिरने पर तुरन्त बोली की संपूर्ण घनराशि जमा करनी होगी।
- किसी भी प्रकार की GST जो देय होगी, उसका भुगतान सफल बोली दाता द्वारा किया जायेगा।
- सम्पत्त सामान का क्रय जैसा है जहाँ है कि पद्धति से किया जायेगा सामान को क्रय करते समय यह माना जायेगा कि बोली दाता ने उसका निरीक्षण किया है।
- सामान का क्रय होने पर क्रेता द्वारा सामान को मौके पर जमा स्थान से अपने प्रबन्ध पर उसी दिन हटाना होगा। यदि निर्धारित समय में क्रेता द्वारा क्रय शुदा सामान नहीं हटाया गया तो उस सामान की जिम्मेदारी इस कार्यालय की नहीं होगी।
- प्रचलित बिक्री तथा केन्द्रीय बिक्री कर सरकारी खजाने में जमा करने के उपरांत चालान फार्म देना होगा, जिसके पश्चात सामान ले जाने की अनुमति होगी।
- सेनानी, 8वीं वाहिनी, भांतिंसी-पुं बल के पास नीलामी को अस्वीकार या निरस्त करने का प्राधिकार है।

सेनानी
CBC 19112/11/0006/2526

8वीं वाहिनी, भांतिंसी-पुं बल

IIFL FINANCE

CIN: L67100MH1995PLC093797
Regd. Office: IIFL House, Sun Infotech Park, Road No. 16V, Plot No.B-23, Thane Industrial Area, Wagle Estate, Thane - 400604
Tel: (91-22) 41035000 • **Fax:** (91-22) 25806654
E-mail: reach@iifl.com • **Website:** www.iifl.com

PUBLIC NOTICE OF E-AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS

It is hereby notified to all concerned borrower(s) in specific and the public, in general, that we, IIFL Finance Limited ("IIFL") are auctioning gold ornaments of defaulted customers who neither regularized their loans nor paid the outstanding amount despite being informed through registered auction notices and repeated reminders. Public auction of the gold ornaments pledged in the following loan accounts will be conducted online through **E-Procurement Technologies Limited** on their online auction platform <https://egold.auctiontngier.net> on **26.04.2025 between 02:00 PM to 05:00 P.M.** Change in venue or date (if any) will be displayed at the auction center. If for any reason the E-Auction cannot be held on the date mentioned herein or the auction does not get completed on the same day, IIFL reserves the right to conduct or proceed with the said auction on any subsequent date on the auction platform and/or auction center with same terms and conditions. The unauctioned gold ornaments shall be auctioned on subsequent working days after displaying the details on auction platform and/or auction center. In case the auction at Branch level fails, the same will be re auctioned on **07.05.2025** without any further notice at district level at the specified district centre. If for any reason, the district level el auction cannot be held on the date mentioned herein or the auction does not get completed on the same day, IIFL reserves the right to conduct or proceed with the district level auction on any subsequent date with same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased, then all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to nominee/legal heir.

District Centre: **KOTDWARA-DEVI ROAD GL - IIFL FINANCE, AMBEY SHOPPING COMPLEX, FIRST FLOOR, DEVI ROAD, KOTDWARA 246149.**
Branch Name: KOTDWARA-DEVI ROAD GL, Taluka - Kotdwara.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24953392, GL31065478, GL31071006, GL32137036, GL32142618, GL32371960, GL32405548, GL32620397, GL32634972, GL32373756, GL33036385, GL33131677, GL33150174, GL33532725, GL33584437, GL33635693, GL33749885, GL33769190, GL33776249, GL33796097, GL33842298, GL34071166, GL34089771, GL34172337, GL34344160.

The E-Auction shall be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis and IIFL does not make any representation or warranties regards quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. The E-Auction process and the sale (if any) pursuant to such E-Auction shall be subject to terms and conditions as IIFL may at its sole discretion deem fit to impose. IIFL, at its absolute sole discretion, may either postpone or remove, any of accounts from auction list and any proceedings without prior notice and without assigning any reason therefor and to reject any or all the bids or offers without assigning any reason for the same. Details of defaulting borrower(s), pledged ornaments and other details have been displayed at the respective branch. The defaulter borrower(s) have an option to repay the entire dues including up to date interest and all applicable charges and close or regularize their loan account even after publication of this notice but in any case, till the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues (if any) will be recovered with interest and costs. However, the defaulter loans which are closed or regularized on or after this publication, will have to bear the proportionate publication charge. Borrowers are requested to submit/update their latest bank account details to enable timely refund of excess auction proceeds, if any.

For detailed information, terms and conditions, contact the concerned branch office of IIFL Finance Limited.

Date: 23.04.2025
Place: PAURI GARHWAL

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY
IIFL FINANCE LIMITED

IIFL FINANCE

CIN: L67100MH1995PLC093797
Regd. Office: IIFL House, Sun Infotech Park, Road No. 16V, Plot No.B-23, Thane Industrial Area, Wagle Estate, Thane - 400604
Tel: (91-22) 41035000 • **Fax:** (91-22) 25806654
E-mail: reach@iifl.com • **Website:** www.iifl.com

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District Centre: **TANAKPUR-CHAMPAWAT SOHO GL - GROUND FLOOR, 275, WARD NO. 11, NEAR HDFC BANK TANAKPUR, DIST. CHAMPAWAT-262309 (UK).**
Branch Name: TANAKPUR-CHAMPAWAT SOHO GL, Taluka - TANAKPUR.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL28804032, GL31386526, GL33299221.

The E-Auction shall be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis and IIFL does not make any representation or warranties regards quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. The E-Auction process and the sale (if any) pursuant to such E-Auction shall be subject to terms and conditions as IIFL may at its sole discretion deem fit to impose. IIFL, at its absolute sole discretion, may either postpone or remove, any of accounts from auction list and any proceedings without prior notice and without assigning any reason therefor and to reject any or all the bids or offers without assigning any reason for the same. Details of defaulting borrower(s), pledged ornaments and other details have been displayed at the respective branch. The defaulter borrower(s) have an option to repay the entire dues including up to date interest and all applicable charges and close or regularize their loan account even after publication of this notice but in any case, till the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues (if any) will be recovered with interest and costs. However, the defaulter loans which are closed or regularized on or after this publication, will have to bear the proportionate publication charge. Borrowers are requested to submit/update their latest bank account details to enable timely refund of excess auction proceeds, if any.

For detailed information, terms and conditions, contact the concerned branch office of IIFL Finance Limited.

Date: 23.04.2025
Place: CHAMPAWAT

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY
IIFL FINANCE LIMITED

BJP slams Congress over remarks on live-in relationship provision in UCC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Bharatiya Janata Party State president Mahendra Bhatt hit back at Pradesh Congress Committee president Karan Mahara for his remarks questioning whether BJP leaders would allow their family members to be in live-in relationships under the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand. Bhatt stated that the inclusion of live-in relationships in the UCC is based on Supreme Court judgments and the provision has been added after thorough legal study. He said that Mahara may lack awareness of the legal context. Bhatt said, “BJP’s concern is not about promoting live-in relationships but ensuring legal protection in such situations, especially when chil-

dren are born or disputes arise.” He clarified that the BJP’s cultural values do not align with live-in relationships but the government has taken steps to legally safeguard individuals involved in them. Registration has been made mandatory to provide legal clarity and protect rights, in line with constitutional and judicial principles, he added. Dharampur MLA Vinod Chamoli also condemned Mahara’s statement and questioned his mentality. He said that while opposing policy matters is a political right, targeting the families of political opponents is inappropriate. Chamoli urged Congress leaders to maintain decorum and avoid personal remarks in public discourse.

Union Home Minister's visit to Uttarakhand deferred

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s scheduled visit to Uttarakhand on April 26 has been postponed, the Bharatiya Janata Party State president Mahendra Bhatt said. He informed that Shah was expected to participate in a programme organised by the Cooperative department at the Forest Research

Institute (FRI) in Dehradun. He said that the party had completed all necessary preparations for his visit but due to unspecified reasons, the visit has now been postponed. He did not provide further details about the cause of the postponement but stated that the party will share updates once a new date is decided.

Garhwal IG reviews Char Dham Yatra preparations and LUCC fraud cases

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Garhwal Range inspector general of police Rajeev Swaroop held a review meeting with police officers from various districts including Tehri, Pauri and Rudraprayag at the zonal office in Pauri. The meeting was focused on preparations for the upcoming Char Dham Yatra and the investigation into fraudulent activities related to LUCC cooperative societies and

bus union members to inform them about traffic rules and the route plan. The officials were also directed to install signboards highlighting blind turns and danger zones. He directed them to keep disaster response equipment ready and identify alternative routes in case of roadblocks. The police will also give updates on route conditions, weather and crowd levels at the pilgrimage sites and share them regularly through social media. Regarding LUCC-related fraud cases, the IG directed officers to intensify investigations and take prompt action. He ordered the investigating officers to examine bank accounts linked to the fraud to ensure individuals found involved should face legal consequences. Officers were instructed to arrest remaining accused persons, examine their movable and immovable



companies. Swaroop emphasised coordination among district police units for traffic, parking, halting areas and route diversion planning. He instructed officers to ensure proper facilities such as water, lighting and toilets in halting areas. The force deployed for the pilgrimage will be briefed and assigned duties starting April 25. He directed to prepare a strong traffic plan to prevent congestion and hold meetings with taxi and

assets and initiate seizure proceedings. Family members who benefited from the fraud must be investigated too, he said. The Pauri senior superintendent of police Lokeshwar Singh, Tehri additional superintendent of police Jodh Ram Joshi, additional superintendent of police (Communications) Anoop Kala and other officers including circle officers and station in-charges from various regions were present during the meeting.

Mock drill to check disaster preparedness for Yatra on Thursday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority (USDMA) are committed to ensuring the safety of pilgrims in the ensuing Char Dham Yatra. Stating this, the NDMA member secretary lieutenant general (retd) Syed Ata Hasnain said that the Yatra is important not only for Uttarakhand but for the entire nation. Lakhs of people from across India and abroad visit Uttarakhand to undertake the Char Dham Yatra. The focus of the authorities is to ensure that the pilgrims undertake the Yatra and return safely to their homes. With this aim in mind, the NDMA and USDMA acting on the directions

drill on forest fires in February, adding that this exercise had been appreciated by various States. “It is vital to learn from disasters to be able to face such situations effectively. The biggest of disasters can be tackled effectively if we work on the lessons learnt from disasters. The level of awareness is comparatively higher among the people of Uttarakhand, which is a plus point,” he said.

Disaster Management and Rehabilita-



of the Ministry of Home Affairs will conduct a mock drill focussed on the Yatra scenario on April 24.

Chairing the table-top exercise held for the mock drill here on Tuesday, Hasnain said that it is an opportunity to ascertain the strength of capabilities, preparations and resources. The mock exercise is also necessary to understand how these aspects can be used in a better manner during an actual disaster scenario. He said that the USDMA had conducted a good mock

tion secretary Vinod Kumar Suman claimed that the USDMA is fully prepared to deal with any disaster situation which may occur during the Char Dham Yatra. Constant coordination is being maintained with all linear departments, he said. As soon as the Yatra begins, nodal officers of

Camps to be held in Nyay Panchayats for UCC portal registration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Dehradun district administration will organise camps in each Nyay Panchayat in Dehradun for registration under the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) portal. The district Panchayati Raj officer has released the roster of these camps under the directions of chief development officer Abhinav Shah. The camps are being set up at the Nyay Panchayat level to facilitate local registrations for marriage, divorce and other related matters, as per the CDO. He informed that in Chakrata block, camps will be held on April 25 in Dasau, April 26 in Mindal, April 28 in Bunad Bastil, April 29 in Bhunad, April 30 in Kandoi Bondar, May 1 in Rangeu, May 2 in Begi and May 3 in Dimich Bhandroli. In the Kalsi block, there are nine Nyay Panchayats. Camps will be held on April 21 in Dagura, April 23 in Koruwa, April 25

in Bhanjra, April 26 in Naraya, April 30 in Koti, May 1 in Kalsi, May 5 in Udpalta, May 7 in Khadi, and May 8 in Ramleela Ground, Mundhaan. In Vikasnagar block, camps will take place on April 23 in Sorna, April 26 in Enfield store, April 28 in Sahawala, and April 30 in Laghan. In Sahaspur block, camps are scheduled for April 23 in Arcadia Grant, April 28 in Aamwala, April 30 in Rampur Bhauwala, May 2 in Jhajhra and May 5 in Sahaspur. In Doiwala block, camps will be held on April 22 in Majri Grant, April 23 in Markham Grant and April 25 in Shyampur. In the Raipur block, camps are scheduled for April 25 in Raipur, April 28 in Sarona, and April 30 in Thano. Sinha has urged residents to attend the camps and complete their registrations under the UCC.

New SIT to probe Ghuddauri engineering college irregularities

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has directed the officials to constitute a new Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe complaints of irregularities in appointments, promotions and other issues in GB Pant Engineering College Ghuddauri, Pauri.

He gave the order while chairing a meeting held at the secretariat here on Tuesday regarding the development of the engineering institutes of the state at the national level.

Dhama has directed the State administration to deploy faculty in all the engineering colleges of the State as per the norms.

The CM said that along with the arrangement of basic facilities, hostels and boundary walls in all the engineering colleges of the state, better road connectivity should also be ensured.

He expressed displeasure over the lack of recruitments in engineering colleges as per the norms

Dhama said that arrangements should also be ensured for placement of students from the campus itself.

On a stern note, the CM ordered investigation into the non-operation of classes in the building constructed at Madhdura in Pithoragarh for the Nanhi Pari Seemant Engineering Institute. He said that a thorough investigation should be conducted as to who had selected the place for the engineering institute and whether this place was suitable or not. “If it was not suitable, then why was the engineering institute built at this place? Why are classes not being conducted in this building even after spending about Rs 15 crore on the building?” he questioned. It is worth noting that at present this engineering college is being operated in the building of Government Inter College.

The Technical Education minister Subodh Uniyal, deputy chair-



and system set in place for the recruitment process. The CM also expressed his annoyance at the decrease in enrolment of the students in the engineering colleges of the State.

He directed the officers that along with increasing student registration, attention should be paid to better curriculum as well use of the latest technology in all trades.

man of Infrastructure Monitoring Council Vishwas Dawar, chief secretary Anand Bardhan, principal secretary RK Sudhanshu, secretary Ranjit Sinha, vice chancellor of Veer Madho Singh Bhandari Uttarakhand Technical University Onkar Singh, additional secretary Swati Bhadauria and directors of engineering institutes attended the meeting.



Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramala Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamari Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kuria (West), Mumbai- 400 070.
CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639. **Web Site:** www.piramalfinance.com
Branch Address: Dhauraj Bag, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West)- 400602.


DEMAND NOTICE


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


| Sr. No. | Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) | Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date | Description of secured asset (immovable property) |
|---------|---|--|---|
| 1. | (LC No. 09700006940 of Dehradun Branch) Vijay Kumar Gupta (Borrower) Sadhana Gupta (Co- Borrower 1) | Dt :24-03-2025/ Rs. 14,51,074.3/- (Rs. Fourteen Lakh Fifty One Thousand and Seventy Four Only and Thirty Paise) NPA (10-03-2025) | Property 88/46/2 Haqiqat Rai Nagar Mannu Ganj Dehradun Dehradun Uttaranchal:- 248001 |
| 2. | (LC No. HLSA0005FA03 of Rudrapur Branch) Ikbai Ahmad (Borrower) Ruksar (Co- Borrower 1) | Dt :24-03-2025/ Rs. 14,56,924/- (Rs. Fourteen Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Four Only) NPA (05-03-2025) | Khata 617, Khasera No 392, Shimla Pistaar Near Tuli Dwar Udhamsinghnagar Uttarakhand- 263153 |
| 3. | (LC No. HLSA0005FA03TU of Rudrapur Branch) Ikbai Ahmad (Borrower) Ruksar (Co- Borrower 1) | Dt :24-03-2025/ Rs. 11,06,803/- (Rs. Eleven Lakh Six Thousand Eight Hundred Three Only) NPA (05-03-2025) | Khata 617, Khasera No 392, Shimla Pistaar Near Tuli Dwar Udhamsinghnagar Uttarakhand- 263153 |
| 4. | (LC No. HLSA00076989 of Haridwar Branch) Shailendra (Borrower) Neeru Devi (Co- Borrower 1) | Dt :24-03-2025/ Rs. 11,84,328/- (Rs. Eleven Lakh Eighty Four Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Eight Only) NPA (05-03-2025) | A Residential Vacant Plot No.343 At Part of Mutalika Khasra No.595/1650, Situated At Gram Badheri Rajputan, Pargana And Tehsil- Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar-249405, Haridwar, Uttarakhand |
| 5. | (LC No. HLSA00076989TU of Haridwar Branch) Shailendra (Borrower) Neeru Devi (Co- Borrower 1) | Dt :24-03-2025/ Rs. 2,47,267/- (Rs. Two Lakh Forty Seven Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Seven Only) NPA (05-03-2025) | A Residential Vacant Plot No.343 At Part of Mutalika Khasra No.595/1650, Situated At Gram Badheri Rajputan, Pargana And Tehsil- Roorkee, Distt- Haridwar- 249405, Haridwar, Uttarakhand |

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to PCHFL as aforesaid, PCHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of PCHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 23-04-2025
Place: Uttaranchal
Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

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**IIFL FINANCE**

CIN: L67100MH1995PLC093797
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District Centre: **HALDWANI-NAINITAL ROAD - 1ST FLOOR GURU GOVIND SINGH TOWER NAINITAL ROAD HALDWANI UTTARAKHAND-263139.**

Branch Name: BAZPUR-GL, Taluka - KASHIPUR.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL25321070, GL27510607, GL27974082, GL31951642, GL31959263, GL322885373, GL33070524, GL33084583, GL33613582, GL33964121.

Branch Name: GADARPUR-KASHIPUR ROAD GL, Taluka - KICHHA.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL25094923, GL25400965, GL25534764, GL28707179, GL32335612, GL33537352.

Branch Name: HALDWANI-KATGHARIYA SOHO GL, Taluka - HALDWANI.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL33488793.

Branch Name: HALDWANI-MANGAL PADAV GL, Taluka - HALDWANI.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL31901615, GL31967885, GL31987498, GL32274673, GL32283956, GL32307736, GL32374626, GL32435086, GL32450952, GL32468969, GL32685141, GL32916894, GL32926231, GL32995676, GL33021219, GL33076759, GL33100496, GL33116309, GL33155929, GL33174550, GL33257012, GL33260397, GL33316572, GL33415180, GL33527473, GL33541273, GL34042295, GL34042990, GL34206592, GL34297672, GL34314699, GL34323526.

Branch Name: HALDWANI-MUKHANI GL, Taluka - HALDWANI.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24754085, GL25073831, GL25122002, GL30973442, GL31862202, GL31878861, GL31975665, GL32056863, GL32134338, GL32145885, GL32158410, GL32165239, GL32168196, GL32168831, GL32247175, GL32287656, GL32402374, GL32402845, GL33068485, GL33087599, GL33108807, GL33246403, GL33263373, GL33304924, GL33311672, GL33313797, GL33319262, GL33324623, GL33365282, GL33372011, GL33470658, GL34153084, GL34174240, GL34273158, GL34281490, GL34293296, GL34348615.

Branch Name: HALDWANI-NAINITAL ROAD, Taluka - HALDWANI.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24515143, GL24529559, GL25150502, GL27282624, GL27804863, GL30974551, GL31354800, GL32492118, GL32619134, GL32636509, GL32703164, GL32790642, GL32802179, GL32810884, GL32815515, GL32827656, GL32836465, GL32883788, GL32911360, GL32925415, GL32935760, GL32954487, GL32971261, GL32997022, GL33015901, GL33042538, GL33249298, GL33387853, GL33365650, GL33367605, GL33373276, GL33388954, GL33389650, GL33441945, GL33459256, GL33475599, GL33501348, GL33505256, GL33510219, GL33897201, GL33955193, GL33960116, GL33964504, GL34026265, GL34119942, GL34155878, GL34180619, GL34258176, GL34655307.

Branch Name: JASPUR-KASHIPUR ROAD GL, Taluka - JASPUR.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24365733, GL24367068, GL25062712, GL25452516, GL25502252, GL26255638, GL28143615, GL32885106, GL33407777, GL33424184, GL34499670.

Branch Name: KASHIPUR-NH 74 GL, Taluka - KASHIPUR.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24765682, GL31525472, GL32513342, GL32516043, GL32525415, GL32945263, GL33196505, GL3340218, GL33415359, GL33433022, GL33497788, GL33513521, GL33805065, GL34095871, GL34116223.

Branch Name: KHATIMA-TANAKPUR ROAD GL, Taluka - KHATIMA.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL24311231, GL24602107, GL24644874, GL24775137, GL24859684, GL24979113, GL25211159, GL25791946, GL33140068, GL33683986.

Branch Name: LALKUAN-RAILWAY STATION ROAD SOHO GL, Taluka - LALKUAN.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL32936060, GL33155454, GL33253812, GL33843205.

Branch Name: RAMNAGAR NAINITAL-RAMNAGAR GL, Taluka - BHIKIA SAIN.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL25259936, GL32246162, GL32254496, GL32727164, GL32744154, GL33114793, GL33924135, GL33939112, GL34226617, GL34247702, GL34265897, GL34304252, GL34331316.


Branch Name: RUDRAPUR UK-NAINITAL ROAD GL, Taluka - KICHHA.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL30784527, GL31929233, GL31930391, GL34015793.

Branch Name: RUDRAPUR UK-SOLANKI HEIGHTS GL, Taluka - KICHHA.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL25236270, GL25531017, GL25617558, GL256274883, GL33071056, GL33084749, GL33110424, GL33121450, GL33164900, GL33575067, GL33775302, GL33800855.

Branch Name: SITARGANJ-GL, Taluka - SITTAGANJ.
Gold Loan A/C No.: GL30708868, GL30710336, GL32561327, GL32583641, GL33065792, GL33086277, GL33093340, GL33119500, GL33469760, GL34458435.

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PMHS agrees to assurance given by Health secretary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Following detailed discussions on demands of government doctors with the Health secretary on Tuesday, the administration assured the doctors that action will be taken on two of their three main demands within a month. The members of Provincial Medical Health Services (PMHS) held a meeting with the Health secretary R Rajesh Kumar here on Tuesday. The meeting was aimed at addressing the long pending demand of the doctors employed by the State government. After detailed deliberations on three major demands, the Health secretary said that the necessary procedure will be initiated to fulfill two of their demands withint the next one month. Kumar assured the doctors that the State government is working in this direction with full seriousness and sensitivity. Discussions were also held on the third demand and it was stated that it may take more time to do the needful to meet it. Stating this clearly, the Health secretary assured the doctors that the government will work seriously and constructively on this demand too. The PMHS office bearers said that the Health secretary's stance was found to be satisfactory and positive, which was appreciated by the PMHS delegation. The PMHS office bearers said that they have agreed to the positive assurance given by the Health secretary and decided to postpone their decision to wear black ribbons and protest, for the next one month. The organisation believes that their demands will be met within the time frame given by the government. Welcoming the stance of the State government, the PMHS has expressed hope that this attitude of cooperation between the Health department and doctors will continue in the future.

Expedite process & start building Rispana-Bindal elevated road: Bardhan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Chief secretary Anand Bardhan said that the Rispana-Bindal elevated road project will play a major role in resolving traffic congestion in Dehradun. He directed the officials concerned to complete the official formalities for this project soon. The chief secretary also directed the officials of Public Works Department (PWD) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to regularly monitor their important projects. Bardhan said this while chairing a meeting with the officials concerned to review the status of important projects in the State on Tuesday. Bardhan said that the Rispana-Bindal elevated road project is vital for resolving traffic congestion in the provisional State capital. He directed the officials to complete the official formalities to ensure that construction of this project begins soon. He said that important projects like the Rispana-Bindal elevated road and the Tehri ring road are reviewed on a weekly basis in order to ensure that they are completed on time. Talks should be held with the Finance department regarding the various options for funding these projects. The priority of all the projects should be ascertained and the officials should ensure that these are completed on time, the chief secretary said. Reviewing NHAI projects, Bardhan said that necessary steps should be taken to complete these works on time. Work on the Haridwar-Nagina Road should be completed soon. He further said that this is a very important project considering the ensuing Char Dham Yatra and the 2027 Kumbh. In addition to this, the work on the construction of the Ballupur-Paonta Sahib Road should also be expedited, the chief secretary said. Secretary Pankaj Pande, additional secretaries Vijay Kumar Jogdande, Vinit Kumar and Vishal Gupta from the NHAI, among other officials concerned, were also present in the meeting.

Kumaon commissioner checks works ahead of tourist season

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Nainital

Kumaon commissioner Deepak Rawat checked the road traffic, parking, shuttle service and other arrangements from Bhawali to Kainchi Dham in Nainital district in view of the tourist season. During the inspection on Tuesday, he directed the officials concerned to complete work on the bypass and other tourist related tasks so that those visiting Bhawali, Nainital and Kainchi Dham do not face any inconvenience. Rawat first visited the Naini Bend sanatorium at Bhawali where he directed Public Works Department officials to expedite works on culvert and road widening. At sanatorium Ratighat phase II, he sought information about the shuttle service. He directed the officials to ensure proper



drinking water and other facilities at the shuttle service site. He directed the officials to improve the condition of the bypass so that tourists can use this route too, which will prevent inconvenience to visitors during the tourist season. Rawat also inspected the helipad near Ratighat, adding that helicopter service to Kainchi Dham will make the journey to the world famous pilgrimage site more convenient while also enhancing employment opportunities for the locals. Rawat also checked the multistories parking, Dhyan Kendra, pathway and bridge being built at Kainchi Dham at a cost of Rs 63 crore. Seeking information about the work from officials of the executing agency PWD, he told them to also ensure drinking water and toilet facility at the parking.

अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति (EOI) नगर निगम, देहरादून की नगरीय ठोस अपशिष्ट प्रबन्धन के अन्तर्गत 06 बाडों में डोर-टू-डोर पृथकीकृत कूड़ा एकत्रीकरण एवं एम०आर०एफ०/स्वच्छता पार्क तक परिवहन, एम०आर०एफ०/स्वच्छता पार्क का निर्माण एवं कूड़े के वैज्ञानिक विधि से जीरो वेस्ट मॉडल पर Zero Cost Basis निस्तारण हेतु अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति आमंत्रित की जाती है। अतः इच्छुक संस्थाएँ अपने अनुभव प्रमाण पत्र, संस्था के रजिस्ट्रेशन तथा योजना का प्रस्तुतीकरण (पीपीपी) आदि प्रपत्रों के साथ नगर निगम, देहरादून के स्वास्थ्य अनुभाग में दिनांक 28.04.2025 को अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक जमा कर सकते हैं तथा नगर आयुक्त, नगर निगम, देहरादून

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पठन-पाठन कार्य अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा किया जाता है। बच्चों के बेहतर भविष्य बनाने के लिये वह सभी सुविधायें विद्यालय में मौजूद है जो वर्तमान में जरूरत के हिसाब से आवश्यक होती है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से यह विद्यालय कक्षा 3 से लेकर कक्षा 12वीं तक संचालित किया जाता है। वर्तमान में प्रधानाचार्य अमनदीप संधू विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहे है। वह कहते हैं कि विद्यालय का गौरव बनाये रखने का प्रयास रहेगा।

शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अद्वितीय भूमिका निभा रहा रामा मॉन्टेसोरी

शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में रामा मॉन्टेसोरी विद्यालय की भूमिका अद्वितीय रही है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित यह विद्यालय नर्सरी से कक्षा 8वीं के बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में जुटा हुआ है। बच्चों का बौद्धिक का शारीरिक विकास के साथ प्रतियोगात्मक विकास पर विद्यालय प्रबंधन विशेष ध्यान देता है। जिस कारण यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर है। प्रधानाचार्य नीलू एलहंस कहती हैं कि बच्चों की बहुमुखी विकास को लेकर उन्होंने विद्यालय में शिक्षण कार्य शुरू किया था और इसी उद्देश्य की पूर्ति को लेकर प्रयासरत रहती हैं।

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Editor's TAKE

A cultural gesture or a strategic reachout?

JD Vance's 3-day visit to India is more than a family trip. It's a message

United States Vice President JD Vance's three-day visit to India might appear on the surface as a cultural homecoming for his family, but beneath the surface lies a layer of strategic nuance that reflects the evolving dynamics of India-US relations — particularly amid the backdrop of Donald Trump's sanctions policy. Vance's India trip is being billed as a family-focused tour, with cultural visits to Jaipur and Agra aimed at helping his children connect with their Indian heritage through their mother, Usha Chilukuri Vance.

However, even such personal diplomacy carries weight. As the highest-ranking US official to visit India under the current administration, his presence alone sends a strong signal: despite recent tensions and Trump-era trade policy headwinds, the US values its long-term strategic relationship with India.

While the official itinerary includes only one major formal engagement — a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi followed by a state dinner — the subtext of that conversation is expected to be significant. Trade negotiations between the two nations remain in a delicate phase, especially with Trump's reciprocal tariffs on Indian goods paused only temporarily until July. The resumption or removal of those tariffs hinges on political will from both sides. Vance's visit offers a diplomatic window for quiet discussions, signalling a willingness from Washington to keep dialogue channels open even if the Trump administration's broader rhetoric leans toward economic nationalism.

Vance's visit comes just weeks after Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard's trip to India, indicating a deliberate staggered engagement from Trump's key officials. Vance's attendance at regional and business forums in Jaipur, including a speech at the Rajasthan International Centre, and his interactions with political figures, provide an opportunity to reinforce bilateral ties beyond just military or economic frameworks.

His presence also comes at a time when Modi is preparing for a high-profile visit to Saudi Arabia, underscoring how both nations are recalibrating their global engagements and seeking balance in a multipolar world order. Vance's India stop, sandwiched between Italy and other key visits, thus plays a quiet yet strategic role in maintaining American visibility in the Indo-Pacific theatre.

By prioritising a family-led cultural immersion alongside limited political engagements, Vance is walking a fine line. It's a display of soft power — highlighting shared values, people-to-people ties, and the significance of diaspora connections — while also reaffirming the transactional, interests-based nature of current US foreign policy under Trump.

The symbolic guard of honour, shopping trips for Indian handicrafts, and visits to Jaipur's heritage sites are diplomatic gestures that soften the harder edges of policy friction. This duality makes Vance's visit a potent blend of optics and opportunity. Whether Vance's trip translates into tangible outcomes on trade or security remains to be seen. But the fact that his first visit to India is being positioned as a cultural one, while quietly engaging on serious policy matters, reflects the Biden-Trump transition's lingering complexities — and how Vance is being groomed not just as a vice president, but as a statesman with cross-cultural appeal.

In a time of strained alliances and recalibrated partnerships, JD Vance's India visit is a quiet assertion: that while policy may shift, relationships endure — and sometimes, it's the personal visits that pave the way for political resets. As India and the United States navigate a landscape marked by shifting alliances and political flux, visits like Vance's offer more than ceremonial value. They signal intent, test the waters of diplomacy and often sow the seeds for future policy recalibration. In an age when optics can drive narrative, such symbolic overtures may well prove to be the quiet bridges over turbulent geopolitical waters.

India bolsters ties with Sri Lanka

As China deepens its presence through major investments, India is doubling down to protect its strategic interests — offering aid, infrastructure to send a message that it is Sri Lanka's most reliable partner

Amid the intensifying India-China battle for influence in Sri Lanka, New Delhi has reason to be satisfied following the recent two-day state visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the island nation during which economic, defence, and energy ties with an important neighbour were shored up. India's strategic interests are intrinsically tied with those of Sri Lanka, hence the need to maintain close and robust bilateral relations with it. New Delhi also sought to convey to the Anura Kumara Dissanayake — led Government the message, yet again, that it can reap greater benefits from India, which is a reliable friend.

The underlying message herein being that China isn't one. It was also conveyed to Colombo once again that protecting India's security interests as well as its own should be of paramount importance. Towards this end, New Delhi also extracted from President Dissanayake an assurance, yet again, that he will keep in mind India's security interests.

To New Delhi's undoubted relief, President Dissanayake reiterated that he will not allow Sri Lankan territory to be used in any manner that will threaten India's security interests. For now, the Dissanayake Government appears to be walking the talk on this account going by news reports that Sri Lanka cancelled a joint naval exercise with India's arch-foe Pakistan, which was to be held in the waters off the strategically located Trincomalee, not too far from the Indian coastline. But not before New Delhi intervened and made its security concerns known, following which the exercise — which was to have been held around the dates PM Modi was to visit the island nation — was scrapped. Given its strategic imperatives in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), it's essential for New Delhi to consolidate its influence in Sri Lanka where India no longer holds sole sway, and to maintain robust ties with the new Government in place there.

In its outreach to the island nation, New Delhi is also seeking to burnish its credentials as a leader of the Global South, projecting itself as a dependable partner for nations facing economic hardship, and who need not fear falling into a debt trap as is often the case when they avail of loans from China.

During the PM's visit, there was also important messaging for Colombo about the perils of hob-nobbing too closely with Beijing, with PM Modi stating during the visit, "We have shared security interests. The security of both countries is interconnected and co-dependent." As a maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean straddling vital sea



lanes, New Delhi knows that Chinese expansionism can pose a strategic threat to both India and Sri Lanka.

The spreading tentacles of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Sri Lanka too have given New Delhi sleepless nights. As China's footprints in Sri Lanka increase, New Delhi knows well that it cannot afford to let its guard down vis-à-vis Beijing as the latter builds deep inroads into India's immediate and extended neighbourhood.

This has forced India to redouble its efforts to ramp up its engagement and provide all manner of development assistance to countries in its neighbourhood so that they remain within its sphere of influence. In the case of Sri Lanka, India provided financial assistance totalling \$4.5 billion in 2022 and 2023 to it during its post-pandemic economic meltdown. This played a vital role in helping Sri Lanka obtain an IMF bailout. India's outreach to the Dissanayake Government has also seen it convert \$20.66 million given as lines of credit into grant assistance to reduce Sri Lanka's debt burden. All this, plus New Delhi's willingness to help Sri Lanka achieve economic stability, is possibly what has helped it forge close ties thus far with the Dissanayake Government.



PARUL CHANDRA

Despite pursuing a policy of 'Neighbourhood First,' India's strategic space in the IOR is increasingly shrinking amidst a relentless Chinese onslaught. Though India has coined the new term 'Mahasagar' (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) replacing the earlier coinage of 'Sagar' (Security and Growth for All) for countries in the IOR, containing China's influence remains a challenge. India's efforts don't always bear fruit, especially when China-leaning Governments are in power in the neighbourhood. Besides, the offer of Chinese loans and financial assistance to build infrastructure is too tempting to resist for cash-strapped neighbours of India struggling to execute mega projects.

In the case of Sri Lanka, the Left-leaning Dissanayake has adroitly managed to balance his country's diplomatic ties with the two Asian giants in the six months since he took charge. It also means that the island nation for now is seeking to reap the benefits from the fierce India-China rivalry in Sri Lanka and the wider IOR. So if Dissanayake earlier this year managed to secure the largest-ever FDI (foreign direct investment) of \$3.7 billion for his country from China for a state-of-the-art oil refinery at Hambantota to be built by Sinopec, he's being wooed by India as well in the area of energy security. PM Modi's visit saw the joint launch of the plan to build the Sampur solar power plant.

It will be developed by the Trincomalee Power Company, which is a joint venture

between Ceylon Electricity Board and India's NTPC. To boost the island nation's energy security, all the more imperative as it went through a crippling forex crisis post the pandemic — which meant huge fuel shortages — the visit saw a tripartite agreement between India, Sri Lanka, and the UAE to develop Trincomalee as a regional energy hub. India needs to consolidate its foothold in Trincomalee on the island nation's eastern coast and keep China at bay. With its huge natural harbour, Trincomalee is of immense geo-strategic import and has the potential to be developed as a naval base. India is also already jointly redeveloping with Sri Lanka World War II — era strategic oil tank farms in Trincomalee. Apart from Trincomalee, New Delhi is also keeping a close eye on another strategic port, the one in Kankesanthurai, which lies not too far away from the Indian coastline. The port in Sri Lanka's Tamil-dominated northern province is close to the Indian coastline and is being "rehabilitated" with a \$61.5 million grant assistance from India. Given its vital security stakes in Sri Lanka, a defence cooperation agreement with the island nation, the first between the two countries, inked during the visit would also help India counter Chinese moves in the region.

After all, China's hegemonic ambitions present a real and present danger to India and indeed the entire IOR.

(The author is Senior Journalist. Views are personal)

Overthinking is injurious to mental health

SECOND Opinion

BY SAKSHI SETHI

Overthinking is a subtle but destructive habit that many people silently suffer from. It often disguises itself as caution or deep reflection, but in truth, it's a mental loop that traps individuals in cycles of worry, doubt, and inaction. While it may seem like a method of preparation or problem-solving, overthinking is far from harmless — it quietly undermines peace of mind, self-confidence, relationships, and even opportunities.

What begins as a desire to make the right choice or prepare for future outcomes quickly spirals into obsessive thinking. The mind replays conversations, dissects every detail, and invents endless "what ifs" and "should haves."

Instead of arriving at clarity, individuals find themselves stuck in a loop of mental noise that prevents real progress. A 2013 study published in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology found that overthinking is closely linked with anxiety and depression. Repetitive negative thinking was shown to be a shared factor in many mental health issues. This highlights that overthinking isn't just an annoying quirk — it's a serious risk factor that drains emotional energy, limits engagement with real life, and inhibits personal growth. Overthinkers often question every decision they make, fearing failure or embarrassment. This undermines

self-trust, making even small choices feel high-stakes. When someone begins to believe that every decision must be perfect, they become paralysed by the fear of imperfection, holding themselves back from growth, both personally and professionally. Relationships are also affected. Overthinkers tend to overanalyse texts, tones, or expressions, often creating negative narratives. A delayed response from a friend can spiral into "They're mad at me," or "I must've said something wrong." These imagined scenarios create emotional distance, tension, and unnecessary stress, making it hard to connect authentically. On top of that, the constant mental activity can interfere with sleep, leading to insomnia or disrupted rest, which further affects emotional well-being. So what fuels this habit of overthinking? At its core, overthinking is driven by fear — the fear of failure, of being judged, of losing control.

Often, these fears stem from past experiences where mistakes were punished or outcomes were unpredictable. As a coping mechanism, the brain tries to take control by playing out every possible scenario. Ironically, this attempt at control results in more chaos and mental fatigue. To escape the grip of overthinking, the first step is awareness. You can't change what you don't recognise. Start by observing your thought patterns and identifying when helpful reflection turns into rumination. The next step is to disrupt the cycle. One effective technique is to set a "thinking deadline." For instance, give yourself 30 minutes to evaluate a decision, weigh the pros and cons, and then make a choice. This method trains your brain to move from overanalysis to

action. Journaling is another powerful tool. Writing down your thoughts gets them out of your head and onto paper, immediately reducing their emotional charge. It also engages the logical part of the brain, helping you process emotions more constructively.

Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), a scientifically supported method, is built around this very idea — challenging irrational thoughts and replacing them with more realistic, balanced perspectives. Most importantly, take action. Overthinking convinces us to wait until we feel perfectly ready, but clarity often comes after we start. Even the smallest step — sending a message, making a phone call, beginning a project — can break the mental gridlock and build momentum.

We begin to see that the consequences of our decisions are rarely as catastrophic as we imagine, and even when things go wrong, we gain experience and resilience. Building trust in yourself is crucial. Each small, confident decision reinforces your capability. Along the way, practising self-compassion helps loosen the grip of perfectionism. You don't need to be flawless or have all the answers. Life is unpredictable by nature, and embracing that truth allows space for peace and growth. In the end, overthinking drains our most valuable resources — time and mental peace. It disguises itself as preparation but only delays action and postpones growth. Life isn't meant to be overanalysed — it's meant to be lived fully and authentically.

(The writer is an educator. Views are personal)

Leaderspeak



Deeply Pained by the Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis. Pope Francis will always be remembered as a beacon of compassion, humility, and spiritual courage by millions across the world. From a young age, he devoted himself towards realising the ideals of Lord Christ. He diligently served the poor and downtrodden. For those who were suffering, he ignited a spirit of hope.

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

Letters to the Editor

SY Quraishi and the politics of identity

Madam — Former Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi responded firmly to BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's recent remark labelling him a "Muslim Commissioner." On Monday, April 21, Quraishi stated his unwavering belief in an India where individuals are defined by their contributions, not their religious identities. He noted that for some, such identities are used to push hateful political narratives. Quraishi served India with distinction as Chief Election Commissioner from July 2010 to June 2012. During his tenure, he introduced key reforms such as the creation of a Voter Education Division and Expenditure Control Division, and he founded the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management.

A proud member of the Haryana cadre of the IAS, Quraishi's public service career is a model of integrity and dedication. His work has been recognised by many, including Dr Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the distinguished grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and C Rajagopalachari. Dr Gandhi lauded Quraishi's efforts to uphold the values of India's constitutional institutions. Dubey's inflammatory comment followed Quraishi's criticism of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, which he described as a "sinister and evil plan" to seize Muslim lands. In a time when hate speech threatens the fabric of democracy, voices like Quraishi's serve as crucial reminders of the constitutional values India must continue to uphold.

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Rohit Sharma's wankhede moment

Madam — There could be no better timing than this for Indian cricket captain Rohit Sharma. Soon after the Mumbai Cricket Association honoured him by naming a stand after him at Wankhede Stadium, he delivered a stunning unbeaten 76-run knock against Chennai Super Kings, featuring four boundaries and six sixes.

His performance not only secured victory but also pushed Mumbai Indians up to sixth place on the IPL points table. From a young boy in Borivali known for breaking window panes to a cricketing legend who has broken records on the global stage, Rohit's rise is truly inspirational.

His success stems from a passion for the game and an unrelenting commitment to his team, not personal milestones.

What sets Rohit apart is his leadership, consistency, and ability to inspire. He is the only Indian cricketer to win two T20 World Cups — once as a player, once as captain — and has led the team to multiple ICC titles.

He is also the only player with three double centuries in ODIs and holds records for the most international sixes and the highest ODI score.

A fearless and flamboyant cricketer, Rohit Sharma's name now fittingly graces a stand at Wankhede. When he bats, it's nothing short of a festival for fans — an experience of joy, energy, and unforgettable moments.

G DAVID MILTON | MARUTHANCODE

Nurturing emotional bonds

Madam — Recent scientific research lends weight to poet William Wordsworth's timeless observation that "the child is father of the man." A study conducted by King's College London, Duke University, and the University of Oslo emphasises that children given the right emotional support can positively influence society as a whole. It is troubling to see that emotional bonds within families are weakening. The lure of seductive technologies is isolating children from authentic human interaction, inhibiting essential emotional and intellectual qualities such as empathy, compassion, and kindness.

In the 21st century, children are often subjected to rigid schedules and academic pressure, leaving little time for meaningful connection with their parents. Given the rise in societal violence, insecurity, and alienation, even small acts of kindness — whether a warm gesture, kind word, or embrace — can serve as seeds for empathy and resilience. In a world increasingly fragmented by ego, hatred, and authoritarianism, the parent-child relationship remains a powerful antidote to many of humanity's ills. Emotional support fosters empathy, resilience, and compassion — qualities essential for a humane society. As technology and pressure erode connection, small acts of love within families can counteract alienation and help shape a more compassionate, unified future.

RANGANATHAN SIVAKUMAR | TAMIL NADU

A BREWING CRISIS THREATENING KERALA'S COMMUNAL HARMONY

Munambam, the jewel of Vypeen Island in Kochi, is a picturesque suburban area nestled along the Arabian Sea. However, it has now become the Achilles' heel of Kerala. In 1902, Abdul Sattar, a prominent member of the Kutchi Memon community — a Muslim trading group from Gujarat that had migrated to the state — was granted a lease for over 400 acres of land in Munambam by the princely state that governed the area. Later, in 1948, his close relative Mohammed Siddique Sait registered the deed, and in 1950, he endowed the land to Farook College in Kozhikode.

Over time, the college sold portions of the land to various encroacher-occupants. In 1971, the Paravur Sub Court ruled that the land was covered under a formal waqf deed. This decision was upheld by the Kerala High Court in 1975. Reports submitted by the Emakulam Collectors to the High Court in 2008 and 2009 also confirmed the land's waqf status. Subsequently, in 2019, the Kerala Waqf

Board formally registered the property as waqf, effectively nullifying all previous land sales. Amid the ensuing confusion, numerous tourist resorts have been established on the disputed land. The residents of the area — primarily Latin Catholic fisherfolk — have been staging a relay hunger strike for over 175 days, demanding recognition of their revenue rights over the land they have long inhabited. Unfortunately, the issue has been framed as a Christian-Muslim conflict, driven by partisan political narratives that now threaten Kerala's communal harmony. Union Minister Kiran Rijji, during his speech in Parliament while introducing the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025, stated that the Munambam issue would be resolved in favour of the residents once the Act came into force. These statements reflect a lack of sincere intent to address the serious concerns of the affected residents. A respected Archbishop recently told the media that the hope for a resolution now lies with the State Government.

— HARIDARSAN RAJAN | KOZHIKODE

Why India must cut GST on farm equipment?

As rural labour dwindles and food security demands rise, mechanisation is no longer optional — it's imperative. Yet the very tools needed to modernise farming are taxed more than luxury items, placing an unjust burden on small and marginal farmers

FIRST
Column

India's agricultural sector, the backbone of rural livelihoods, is at a critical juncture. The transition to modern and mechanised farming is no longer a choice but is necessary to ensure food security, optimise productivity, and improve farmers' incomes. Yet, a significant bottleneck hampers this transition — the irrational Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure on tractors and other agri-implements.

Today, farm equipment is taxed at 12 per cent, more than a luxury watch is taxed at 5 per cent. For a small or marginal farmer purchasing a low-horsepower tractor costing ₹5-7 lakh, this means paying ₹60,000 to ₹84,000 upfront as GST alone — a prohibitive cost for most. This, in turn, delays the mechanisation process in areas where it is needed the most.

Pre-GST Scenario Was More Farmer-Friendly

Before the implementation of GST on July 1, 2017, tractors and most agri-implements were exempt from excise duties and subject to only 4-6 per cent Value Added Tax (VAT), depending on the state. Fertilisers, an essential element of agriculture, were previously taxed at 6 per cent (1 per cent excise and 5 per cent VAT). In the GST regime, the introduction of a 12 per cent GST rate on fertilisers was reduced to 5 per cent. However, on agricultural machinery still, 12 per cent GST disrupted the affordability landscape, disproportionately impacting small and marginal farmers, who make up over 86 per cent of India's total landholdings and are responsible for producing more than 60 per cent of the country's food grains.

While GST has unified the country's indirect tax system, it has also inadvertently penalised these vulnerable farmers by making essential farm tools more expensive. Rationalising GST to 5 per cent or even zero for tractors, their components, and agri-implements would significantly ease their financial burden and accelerate rural mechanisation.

Haryana's Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has recently written to the Union Finance and Agriculture Minister seeking GST exemption on 10 essential farm implements like rotavators, zero-till drills, super-seeders, straw-balers, and tractor-mounted spray pumps — a move and other states CMs should also collectively endorse.

Policy Contradictions: Subsidise on One Hand, Tax on the Other

The contradiction is glaring. The Government's flagship schemes, like the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM), offer subsidies of up to 50 per cent on machinery such as tractors, combine harvesters, sugarcane harvesters, cotton pickers, for establishing custom hiring centres (CHCs) and also to individual farmers for buying pump sets, tractor mounted sprayers, zero till and seed drills. Yet, these efforts are undermined when the same equipment attracts a steep GST rate.



A reduced GST rate on farm machinery will empower smallholder farmers and reduce the Government's subsidy burden. Lowering upfront taxes means farmers can buy machines at more reasonable prices, translating into more minor subsidy requirements for the Government.



AS MITTAL

Inconsistencies in the Green Energy Push

The policy incongruities extend to the renewable energy sector as well. Renewable energy devices such as solar panels, biogas plants, and windmill components attract only 5 per cent GST to promote sustainability. Electric vehicles (EVs) also enjoy a 5 per cent GST and a 15 per cent discount on third-party insurance premiums. Yet, electric tractors — vital for reducing agriculture's carbon footprint — are taxed at 12 per cent GST, the same as diesel tractors, and do not qualify for any insurance premi-

um relief. According to a study by the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT), aligning electric tractors with EV incentives could reduce the price gap between electric and diesel tractors by nearly 40 per cent, helping India make a greener shift in agriculture.

The Urgency for Mechanisation

Mechanisation is the key to addressing India's agricultural productivity paradox. Despite India being the world's second-largest agricultural producer, only 47 per cent of its farming processes are mechanised, compared to 95 per cent in the United States, 75 per cent in Brazil, and 57 per cent in China. At this pace, India will need at least 25 more years to reach comparable levels.

Labour shortages due to rural-to-urban migration have further exacerbated the crisis. The share of the agricultural workforce has dropped from 59 per cent in 1991 to just 39 per cent in 2023. Mechanisation is essential to offset this shrinking labour force, increase yields, reduce drudgery, and make farming more attractive to rural youth.

Limited uptake

Tractors dominate India's farm equipment market,

while implements such as harvesters, seed drills, tillers, and planters account for only 15-20 per cent of the market share. This limited uptake is due to the prohibitive costs and a lack of awareness about the productivity benefits of modern equipment.

The Government and multilateral agencies are already focusing on mechanisation schemes. However, these interventions will not reach their full potential unless complemented by lower taxation.

Farm mechanisation is not merely about replacing manual labour; it is about optimising inputs, improving efficiency, and securing rural incomes in a challenging agrarian landscape. It is time for the GST Council to undertake an urgent review of agri-implement tax slabs. A uniform GST rate of 5 per cent or zero on all agricultural machinery and their components would make mechanisation affordable for small and marginal farmers, stimulate demand in under-mechanised regions, encourage the adoption of green technologies like electric tractors, and reduce Government subsidy outflows in the long run. The 'magical' character of farm mechanisation needs a booster dose. Rationalising GST will empower farmers, create rural entrepreneurship opportunities via CHCs, and help India achieve sustainable development goals. It will bridge the mechanisation gap and unlock the true potential of Indian agriculture. Mechanisation is the future, but affordability is the key.

India's agricultural future hinges on widespread mechanisation, yet high GST rates on essential farm equipment act as a major roadblock. Small and marginal farmers — who form over 86 per cent of India's agrarian base — are unfairly burdened by the 12 per cent GST on tractors and implements, a rate higher than that on luxury items. This policy contradiction undermines Government subsidies offered through schemes like RKVY and SMAM, inflating costs and stalling progress. Haryana's call for GST exemption on key implements is a step in the right direction that other states must support. The mismatch extends to green technologies too — electric tractors face the same GST rate as diesel ones, with none of the incentives that electric vehicles enjoy. This hinders both affordability and sustainability goals.

Meanwhile, India's mechanisation rate lags behind other major agricultural economies, slowed further by rural labour shortages and high upfront machinery costs. Rationalising GST to 5 per cent or zero for all agricultural equipment is critical. It would ease financial pressure on farmers, reduce Government subsidy burdens, and accelerate the adoption of both conventional and green technologies. Mechanisation is not a luxury — it's a necessity. Affordability, enabled through fair taxation, is the key to unlocking a more productive, sustainable, and prosperous agricultural future.

(The writer is Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views are personal)

RTI amendment erodes transparency

By removing the public interest safeguard from Section 8(1)(j), the amendment now imposes a blanket exemption on all personal data — even when linked to public duties — thereby crippling the citizen's ability to hold public officials accountable

The recent amendment to the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, through the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, marks a pivotal retreat from the transparency regime that India painstakingly built over nearly two decades. By shielding personal information under a blanket exemption, the Modi Government has altered the balance between privacy and the public's right to know.

The operation of the RTI Act — informed by several judgments by the Supreme Court and High Courts — has shown that personal information not related to public activity was already protected.

It underlines that there was already sufficient judicial restraint in place to protect genuinely private data. Landmark rulings like *Girish Deshpande vs CIC* (2013), and the *Puttaswamy* (2017) privacy judgment, drew clear boundaries between personal data and information relevant to public interest. Courts consistently held that unless the disclosure of personal information served a larger public cause, it should be denied.

Therefore, the amendment was not needed and shows legislative overreach, reflecting mistrust in judicial discretion. It signals a shift from a principle-based regime to a bureaucratic shield where no scrutiny is possible. The amendment now legalises the denial of information that courts had earlier allowed when public interest was evident-setting a regressive precedent that may encourage arbitrariness and corruption.

The SC judgment reinforces that safeguarding personal privacy and promoting institutional transparency are not mutually exclusive but are jointly essential.

This point underscores a vital democratic balance. The Supreme Court, especially in the *Puttaswamy* case, held that privacy is a fundamental right but not an absolute one; it must be balanced with transparency, especially when public interest is involved. The original RTI Act embodied this balance by permitting the release of personal information where larger institutional accountability or public interest was at stake.

The amendment breaks this balance by giving unchecked primacy to privacy, even when it is used as a smokescreen to hide inefficiency, nepotism, or corruption. For instance, public access to officials' attendance, disciplinary records, or property



details — which can reveal disproportionate assets — would now be blocked. The implication is that institutions become unanswerable to the public, reducing the citizen's role from a watchdog to a mute spectator.

The sweeping changes have been introduced through the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, which amended Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. Earlier, this section exempted disclosure of personal information unless there was an overriding public interest. The amendment removes this public interest override and comprehensively exempts all personal data from disclosure under RTI, regardless of its connection to



KS TOMAR

public duties. It is a fundamental shift from a "case-by-case" evaluation to an "absolute bar" on access to personal information, thereby hollowing out the core of the RTI regime.

The implication is grave: details about the conduct, performance, assets, and public duties of Government officials — even when crucial to detect corruption-can now be shielded from public scrutiny under the excuse of "Privacy". It turns the RTI from a transparency-enabling instrument into a tool riddled with opaque exemptions, undermining citizens' ability to hold officials accountable.

This proviso was a crucial equaliser — it mandated that any information which cannot be denied to Parliament or a State Legislature should not be denied to a citizen.

Its removal gives disproportionate access to legislators while stripping ordinary citizens of equal standing in accessing information. It opens the doors for selective transparency, where MPs and MLAs can

access sensitive Government information while citizens are stonewalled. This defeats the spirit of the RTI Act, of 2005 which was built on the idea that transparency is not a privilege but a right.

The move indicates a central tendency to empower the political class at the cost of democratic equity. It also allows the bureaucracy to selectively disclose information to suit political interests while denying the same to activists, journalists, or public-spirited individuals.

This technical change has a wide-ranging impact. By using the DPDP Act to amend Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, the Government has effectively introduced a data protection regime that overrides the RTI's foundational purpose-access to public information. The phrase "all personal information" is undefined and absolute, allowing information officers to deny almost anything under the guise of personal data.

Details such as educational qualifications, performance appraisals, transfer postings, and reasons for disciplinary action can all

now be denied, even if such data expose abuse of power or fraud. This will embolden non-performance, discourage whistle-blowers, and limit the ability of journalists, lawyers, or citizens to demand accountability. In essence, it turns a democratic law into a bureaucratic fortress.

The Modi Government claims that legal obligations under RTI remain unaffected but this assertion is misleading. Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act directly amends the RTI Act itself, thereby altering the legal obligation.

There is a common perception amongst the citizens having consciousness about the RTI Act that the center should pause and review the amendment which reflects a broader democratic concern as it will dilute the purpose of the entire process of seeking information. The vociferous demand to reconsider the amendment is a red flag from the opposition and civil society as these changes are not about protecting privacy but about restricting scrutiny.

The repeal demand stems from fears that the Government is creating an architecture of secrecy behind the smokescreen of data protection. If allowed to persist, this may institutionalise opacity and convert public institutions into information black holes-something antithetical to participatory democracy.

The RTI Act was a landmark law that was an unprecedented achievement of the people's movement under Magsaysay winner, Aruna Roy that democratised access to governance and brought the citizen to the center of accountability. By altering its core provisions, the Modi Government risks reversing this progress.

While data protection is necessary in the digital age, it should not come at the cost of institutional transparency. Instead of finding a nuanced balance, the Government has chosen to impose blanket opacity.

The implications go far beyond legalese-they erode the foundations of a transparent republic, where the citizen has the right to question power. This amendment must be revisited, reviewed, and if necessary, repealed to restore the sanctity of the RTI Act.

(The writer is a senior political analyst and Ex Chairperson of the Standing Committee of All-State Public Service Commissions in India. Views are personal)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kyiv

A residential building in a densely



Russia has effectively rejected a US proposal for an immediate and full 30-day halt in the fighting by imposing far-reaching conditions. Meanwhile, both Russia and Ukraine are preparing for the spring-summer military campaign, Ukrainian and Western officials say.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Vatican City

No funeral date has been announced. The next pope is yet to be decided.

Here's the latest:

Dutton, who was raised by a Catholic father and Protestant mother and attended

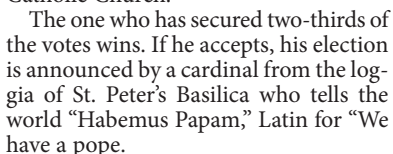
Former Premier Chen Chien-jen, a devout Catholic who visited the Vatican multiple times at the invitation of Francis and previous popes, spoke of the deep loss felt by the faithful.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Vatican

Francis stopped by the basilica on his way home from the Gemelli hospital on March 23, after his 38-day hospital stay, to deliver flowers to be placed before the

The pope's formal apartments in the Apostolic Palace and in the Santa Marta hotel were sealed Monday evening, following a centuries-old ritual. Cardinal Kevin Farrell, who as camerlengo had the task of announcing the death and confirming it once the cause was determined, presided over the rituals.

Once in St. Peter's, his coffin will not



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Boston

"Nor has the Government acknowledged the significant consequences that the indefinite freeze of billions of dollars in federal research funding will have on Harvard's research programs, the beneficiaries of that research, and the national

The Trump administration also threatened to block the university from enrolling international students. The university frames the government's demands as a threat not only to the Ivy League school but to the autonomy that the Supreme Court has long granted American universities. For the Trump administration, Harvard presents the first major hurdle in its attempt to force change at universities that Republicans say have become hotbeds of liberalism and antisemitism.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Washington

Trump has always had a high tolerance for chaos, shunning traditional policy deliberations to entertain divergent opin-

The only thing they have in common is the belief that they should show personal fealty to Trump. That got them the job but shows how unserious they are.

— JOHN BOLTON, FORMER NSA

The situation is a test for Susie Wiles, the White House chief of staff, who helped run Trump's presidential campaign last year.

On Monday, the president brushed off reports that Hegseth participated in a second group chat to talk about pending airstrikes in Yemen last month. The first chat, which used the encrypted messaging application Signal, involved top administration officials as well as the editor of *The Atlantic*, who was accidentally included in the discussion.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New York

“What began as a grassroots platform

The festival will pay tribute to Benegal, a “titan of Indian parallel cinema”, who passed away in December 2024 at the age of 90. NYIFF will screen a 4K restoration of “Manthan”, Benegal’s landmark 1976 film about India’s White Revolution, restored by the Film Heritage Foundation. The film premiered at the Cannes Classics in 2024.

Chhabra said Siddiqui, who has won two NYIFF best actor trophies, will be

The 2025 festival opens with the East Coast premiere of the Manoj Baypayee, Priyanka Bose and Deepak Dobrylal starrer "The Fable", directed by Raam Reddy. With a debut at the 2024 Berlinale, the film "merges surrealism and psychological tension against the Himalayan backdrop". The film, whose ensemble includes Tillotama Shome in a cameo, recently took home Best Film at the Leeds International Film Festival.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

All the matters will be taken up through video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application/software;
 (ii) "Meeting ID" and Password for the date of hearing qua case to be taken by Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar shall be displayed in the daily case list itself at DRT Official Portal i.e. drt.gov.in (iii) in any exigency qua that the Advocate/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 23748478.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal this 03rd day of April., 2025.

BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL, SECTION OFFICER, DRT-II, DELHI

Reforms key to India’s growth story over next two decades: FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ San Francisco

India’s quest for sustained growth over the next two decades hinges on a new paradigm, driven by bold reforms, enhanced domestic capabilities, and strategic institutional collaborations suited for the evolving global landscape, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

The last two Union Budgets have laid the groundwork for this transformation, with a clear multi-sectoral policy agenda, she said, while speaking at Hoover Institution at Stanford University California.

In the last decade, she said the government has undertaken structural reforms, rationalising over 20,000 compliances, decriminalising business laws and digitising public services to reduce friction.

She further said a significant thrust on infrastructure development has also created a strong foundation for manufacturing-led growth by bolstering investor confidence over the last 10 years.

Our experience with implementing the Business Reform Action Plan by different state governments has demonstrated that deregulation is a powerful catalyst for industrial growth

— NIRMALA SITHARAMAN, FINANCE MINISTER

This has been enabled by a more than four-fold increase in the union government’s capital expenditure between 2017-18 and the 2025-26 Budget, she said.

“Our experience with implementing the Business Reform Action Plan by different state governments has demonstrated that deregulation is a powerful catalyst for industrial growth,” she said.

Going forward, the Finance Minister said, sustaining India’s growth momentum calls for a fresh approach of bold reforms, adaptive strategies in line with changing global landscape.

“Over the next two decades, sustaining

India’s growth momentum calls for a fresh approach grounded in bold reforms, stronger domestic capacities, renewed institutional partnerships and adaptive strategies suited for the evolving global landscape,” she said.

India has set a goal to become a developed nation by 2047, the year when the country would enter the 100th year of its independence from British rule.

“As we lay the foundation for a developed India, we must stay committed to long-term goals, without losing sight of present realities. The global order is changing. That poses challenges but also opportunities. We must be prepared to tackle the former while seizing the latter,” she said.

India’s journey to become a ‘Viksit Bharat’ by 2047 is not merely an aspiration but a shared national mission powered by a vision for inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-led growth, she said.

Despite the pandemic shock and a banking crisis, she said, “our progress over the past decade, anchored in strong macro-

economic fundamentals and steady reforms, gives us confidence and direction for the road ahead.” As a result, she said, India has risen from the world’s tenth-largest economy to the fifth-largest.

Quoting a report by Indiaspora and BCG, she said, Indian first-generation immigrants founded 72 unicorns between 2018 and 2023 and these unicorns were worth at least USD 195 billion in valuation and employed nearly 55,000 people.

More than 65 per cent of Global Capability Centres (GCC) in India have their headquarters in the US, she said, adding, these GCCs provide high-value-added, bespoke services in areas such as R&D, management consulting and auditing. Observing that the US is a mature start-up hub which has developed over 50-60 years, while India’s start-up journey is a nascent one, she said, “over the course of the last decade, the government’s focus was on reducing the cost of entrepreneurial risk-taking by removing regulatory and infrastructural barriers.Rs

FM Sitharaman invites global IT companies to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ San Francisco

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday met several IT industry leaders and invited them to explore opportunities for technical collaboration and investment. During a bilateral meeting with Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian and his team here, Sitharaman encouraged them to explore local linkages in India for territorial collaboration and to develop tech for India and the world market under the ‘Make In India’ initiative.

They discussed the transformative evolution of India’s digital infrastructure under the Digital India initiative in recent years, positioning the country as a global leader

in digital adoption.

Kurian appreciated India’s AI Mission and the trajectory India is taking under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He also emphasised the need to connect India to the global network through land and sea cable infrastructure.

During another meeting with Turing CEO Jonathan Siddharth, the Finance Minister highlighted India’s policy framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and encouraged his company to explore opportunities for collaboration and fruitful engagement. Siddharth expressed his desire to see India at the forefront of the AI revolution and spoke about working in the domain of AI with India and through

Indian contributors to create a sovereign model that can serve as a template for the world, the finance ministry said in a series of posts on X. Data Robot CEO Debanjan Saha also called on the Finance Minister and referred to India’s potential to become an AI superpower and expressed interest in participating in the AI Centre of Excellence, for which the Union Budget 2025-26 recently allocated ₹500 crore.

“FM @nsitharaman underlined the steps that the Government of India has taken over years to boost digital infrastructure, including budgeting ₹10,300 crore for IndiaAI Mission, creating AI language technologies through BharatGen and Sarvam-1, and the establishment of the Srijan Centre for

Generative AI at IIT Jodhpur @saide_iitj among others,” another post said. The Finance Minister explained to him about the potential opportunity through the proposed Rs 1 lakh crore corpus, private sector-driven research, development, and innovation scheme, and informed about India ranking first globally in AI skill penetration where India is ahead of many developed countries. In another meeting with Anjney Midha, General Partner with a16z and Raghu Raghuram advisor VMware, Sitharaman suggested that a16z and VMware may like to explore collaboration across sectors within the domain of AI including in education, healthcare, and AI Centres of Excellence.

ITC Hotels signs 14 Fortune Hotels in 2024-25



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

ITC Hotels Ltd on Tuesday said it signed 14 ‘Fortune Hotels’ and opened seven new properties under the brand in 2024-25, to further strengthen presence, especially tier II and tier III markets.

The new properties are located across emerging markets and gateway destinations and will further strengthen the brand’s presence, especially tier 2 and tier 3 markets in the upscale to midmarket category, the company said in a statement.

As of March 31, 2025, Fortune brand had a portfolio of 78 hotels comprising 56 operational hotels across India and Nepal with 22 hotels in pipeline, it added.

“As we enter this new financial year, we reaffirm our commitment to sustained

growth and excellence in hospitality,” ITC Hotels Ltd Managing Director Anil Chadha said.

He further said, “This footprint expansion endeavours to offer travellers access to prime locations and Fortune’s comfortable hospitality.”

In FY25, the company said Fortune saw six new hotel openings in India at Pahalgam, Puri, Chennai, Candolim (Goa), Palampur (Himachal Pradesh), Ekta Nagar (Gujarat) and its first international hotel opening in Nepal at Bhaktapur.

The new signings were in Goa, Kolkata, Chennai, Rishikesh, Indore, Bhimtal, Mukteshwar, Gorakhpur, Mohali, Surat and Ayodhya, it said, adding that with these Fortune Hotels now has presence in over 65 cities across India and Nepal.

Gold breaches ₹1 lakh mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Gold prices surged by ₹1,800 to zoom past the crucial ₹1 lakh-mark for 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid buying rush by local jewellers and stockists in anticipation of increased demand during Akshaya Tritiya and wedding season even as global macroeconomic uncertainties continued to fuel safe-haven chase.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity climbed ₹1,800 to hit the lifetime peak of ₹1,01,600 per 10 grams from Monday’s closing level of ₹99,800 per 10 grams.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped by ₹2,800 to hit a record high of Rs 1,02,100 per 10 grams in the local markets on Tuesday. It had settled at ₹99,300 per 10 grams in the preceding session.

Akshaya Tritiya, which is considered the most auspicious day to buy gold, falls on April 30. The ongoing wedding season will continue till May end.

The yellow metal has spurted by ₹22,650 per 10 grams, or nearly 29 per cent, since December 2024.

Meanwhile, silver prices remained flat at ₹98,500 per kg on Tuesday.

“The new all-time-high attained by the yellow metal is primarily influenced by the rising tensions between President Trump and US Fed Chair Jerome Powell regarding the interest rate cut.

“Additionally, weakness in the US dollar following the tensions between Trump and Fed Chair Powell, and uncertainties around the US-China trade war are another crucial factors that has pushed gold price to a record high,” Colin Shah, MD, Kama Jewelry, said.

CAIT demands regulator for e-commerce

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Traders’ lobby CAIT on Tuesday demanded setting up of an independent regulatory body for digital commerce for oversight and fixing accountability on e-commerce and quick commerce platforms, alleging anti-competitive practices like predatory pricing, deep discounting and exploitation of gig workers.

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) also sought expeditious roll-out of the National e-Commerce Policy and e-Commerce rules under the Consumer Protection Act, both currently under finalisation by the Commerce as well as Food & Consumer Affairs Ministries, respectively, to safeguard the interests of retail traders. It recommended an imposition of a ‘luxury tax’ under the prevailing GST framework on goods sold via e-commerce platforms, arguing that the practice of buying goods online be considered a ‘luxury’.

Currently, goods and services tax is a four-tier tax structure with slabs at 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent.

Dhairiyasheel Patil, National President, All India Consumer Products Distributor Federation (AICPDF), and CAIT’s Senior Vice President, told PTI that as per estimates, as many as 10 lakh kirana stores have shut down operations in the last two-three years, owing to lack of viability and afford-

At a conclave organised by CAIT, traders’ representatives adopted a resolution demanding immediate enforcement of FDI and e-commerce policies and rolling out of e-commerce rules

ability. While several kirana stores have also come up during the period, he said, more shops have closed as compared to the number of new retail shops opened.

“Quick commerce has now expanded to 100 cities. In metro cities, 70 per cent of the retailers are using rented shops. Till now 10 lakh shops have been shut as per our estimates in the last two-three years. Though new shops have also opened, the number of new shops that have opened is less as compared to the number of small retail stores that have shut down due to lack of affordability and viability of operations,” he shared.

The traders’ body also recommended prohibition of inventory-led operations by platforms posing as marketplace.

As per existing rules, 100 per cent FDI is allowed through an automatic route in the marketplace model of e-commerce. However, overseas investment is not permitted in an inventory-based model.

In the marketplace model, e-commerce

entities can only provide a platform for third-party sellers and they cannot own the inventory. They also cannot directly or indirectly influence the price of the goods.

It has been reported in the past that the CCI, which works to ensure fair business practices across sectors in the marketplace, is already looking into alleged anti-competitive ways of e-commerce companies.

At a conclave organised by CAIT, traders’ representatives adopted a resolution demanding “immediate enforcement of FDI and e-commerce policies and rolling out of e-commerce rules under Consumer Protection Act; imposition of luxury tax under GST on purchase of goods from e-commerce platforms; and stoppage of human right violations committed by quick commerce & e-commerce companies”.

They also stated that accountability of e-commerce platforms should be fixed and banks should be directed not to discriminate their credit card usage between e-commerce and small shopkeepers in terms of offering cash backs.

The resolution also adopted recommendations seeking “prohibition of inventory-led operations by platforms posing as marketplaces; formation of an independent regulatory body for digital commerce; mandatory transparency in algorithms, pricing, and seller selection; and protection and promotion of small Kirana stores and offline trade”.

Tenure of RBI Deputy Governor extended

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The government has extended the term of RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar for another one year

till May 2026, according to sources.

This is the second one-year extension granted to him. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect from May 3, 2025, or until further orders, sources said quoting a government order dated April 21. The ACC is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was appointed as RBI Deputy Governor in May 2021 for an initial period of three years. In his previous role as Executive Director, Sankar was looking after the Department of Payment and

Settlement Systems, the Department of Information Technology, Fintech and the Risk Monitoring Department in RBI.

Sankar has also in the past served as an IMF Consultant (2005-11) towards developing government bond markets and debt management. Outside his career at the RBI, Sankar holds the role of Chairman at Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services (IFTAS) and is also a member of the Board of Directors at ReBIT (Reserve Bank Information Technology Private Limited) and a member of the governing council at IDRBT.

Rupee falls 8 paise to settle at 85.23 against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

The rupee consolidated in a narrow-range and settled for the day lower by 8 paise at 85.23 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as the support from positive domestic equities was negated by dollar short-covering by investors.

orex traders said foreign fund inflows supported the domestic unit. However, a recovery in crude oil prices dented investor sentiment.

Moreover, concerns persisted over economic headwinds from tariffs and US monetary policy that could dampen demand.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.11 and moved between the intra-day high of 85.07 and the low of 85.23 against the greenback.

The unit ended the session at 85.23 (provisional), registering a loss of 8 paise over its previous closing level on Tuesday, after witnessing a gaining streak for five straight sessions.

Sensex, Nifty rise for 6th day on row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty advanced on Tuesday, marking their sixth straight day of rise helped by gains in banking and FMCG shares and foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 187.09 points or 0.24 per cent to settle at 79,595.59. During the day, it jumped 415.8 points or 0.52 per cent to 79,824.30.

The NSE Nifty rose by 41.70 points or 0.17 per cent to 24,167.25. Barring IT and energy sectors, most indices ended in the green, with realty, FMCG, and banking emerging as the top gainers.

From the Sensex pack, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Eternal, Kotak Mahindra Bank, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank were the major gainers.

On the other hand, IndusInd Bank fell the most by 4.88 per cent after reports claimed that the bank has hired EY for forensic audit into ₹600 crore microfinance discrepancy.

The bank after the market hours informed exchanges that it has not engaged EY for a forensic audit as reported in the news item but its Internal Audit Department (IAD) is conducting a review of the MFI business to exam-

From the Sensex pack, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Eternal, Kotak Mahindra Bank, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank were the major gainers. Power Grid was among the laggard

ine certain concerns.

Power Grid, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards.

“Despite negative global cues related to Trump-Fed tensions, the national market has maintained its optimism. The RBI’s relaxed liquidity coverage ratio guidelines, which are anticipated to enhance credit growth, boosted the finance sector. Foreign inflows have remained consistent for the fourth consecutive day, driven by a weakening dollar and competitive valuations.

“Additionally, domestic macroeconomic conditions are improving, with declining inflation and rising expectations of further rate cuts by the RBI, which are likely to lower costs and stimulate demand. These factors are expected to support corporate earnings in FY26,” Vinod Nair, Head of Research,

Geojit Investments Limited, BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.82 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.81 per cent. BSE sectoral indices, realty jumped 2.40 per cent, FMCG (1.87 per cent), consumer durables (1.43 per cent), healthcare (0.75 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.72 per cent) and bankex (0.61 per cent).

BSE teck, BSE Focused IT, power, utilities, IT and telecommunication were the laggards. As many as 2,477 stocks advanced while 1,504 declined and 149 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Since April 9, the BSE benchmark has jumped 5,748.44 points or 7.78 per cent, and the Nifty zoomed 1,768.1 points or 7.89 per cent. pause after a strong uptrend is normal. While strong domestic fundamentals continue to provide support, underperformance in the US markets is capping the upside momentum,” Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹1,970.17 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Shanghai SSE Composite index and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng settled higher while South Korea’s Kospi index and Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 ended lower.

INBRIEF

FRENCH AMBASSADOR VISITS GNDU FOR GOLDEN JUBILEE

Amritsar: French Ambassador Thierry Mathou visited Guru Nanak Dev University’s Golden Jubilee Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, engaging with startups and faculty. The visit, lauded by university leadership, marked a key step in strengthening Indo-French innovation and academic collaboration.



VEDANTA CHAIRMAN HAILS RAJASTHAN

Jaipur: Vedanta Chairman Anil Agarwal urged accelerated industrial growth in Rajasthan, citing its vast mineral wealth and \$196B GDP lag. He emphasized transforming resources into value-added products and praised the state’s entrepreneurial spirit, reaffirming Vedanta’s commitment to Rajasthan’s economic ascent.

Bengaluru in October, Sarfaraz should have sealed his place in the Test squad but some atrocious shot selection in the following Tests put him down in the pecking order. In Australia, he was more of a tourist and was not even discussed for a place in the first XI. However for the sake of continuity, selectors can still look at him

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SCHOOLS IN NAINITAL : IN QUEST OF MULTIFACETED EXCELLENCE



Afzal Hussain Fauji Nainital

The academic environment across the world has undergone massive changes in the past few years and the Internet has played a pivotal role. If we talk about the educational institutions spread over the captivating lake district of Nainital, they were considered benchmarks of quality and futuristic education earlier and even today they occupy the premier position in terms of academic excellence not just in the country but across the world.

The residential schools in Nainital, in particular, stand in a class by themselves; without peer, so to say. Truth to tell, there is hardly any state in India from where students do not come to receive education here. Not just students from India but those from foreign countries also study in these schools, given their fame as institutions which offer comprehensive education and nurturing environment. It hardly needs mentioning that many of the Nainital-based schools are more than



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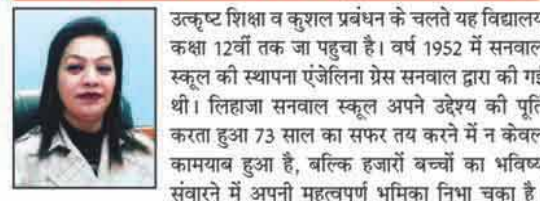
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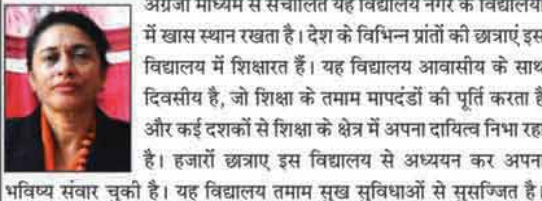
नगर का अग्रणी स्कूल सनवाल



उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा व कुशल प्रबंधन के चलते यह विद्यालय कक्षा 12वीं तक जा पहुंचा है। वर्ष 1952 में सनवाल स्कूल की स्थापना एंजेलिना ग्रेस सनवाल द्वारा की गई थी। लिहाजा सनवाल स्कूल अपने उद्देश्य की पूर्ति करता हुआ 73 साल का सफर तय करने में न केवल कामयाब हुआ है, बल्कि हजारों बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा चुका है।

सीबीएससी बोर्ड से संबद्ध सनवाल स्कूल अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित किया जा रहा है। वर्तमान में प्रबंध निदेशक गौरव सनवाल विद्यालय का कुशल प्रबंधन का दायित्व निभा रहे हैं, जबकि ए इमेन्युअल प्रधानाचार्य के पद पर बेहतर शिक्षण कार्य रही हैं। वह कहती हैं कि विद्यालय को आगे ले जाने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं और आधुनिक शिक्षा के साथ बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने हेतु दायित्व निभा रही हैं।

छात्राओं का भविष्य संवार रहा एमएल साह बाल विद्या मंदिर



अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित यह विद्यालय नगर के विद्यालयों में खास स्थान रखता है। देश के विभिन्न प्रांतों की छात्राएं इस विद्यालय में शिक्षा लेती हैं। यह विद्यालय आवासीय के साथ दिवसीय है, जो शिक्षा के तमाम मापदंडों की पूर्ति करता है और कई दशकों से शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अपना दायित्व निभा रहा है। हजारों छात्राएं इस विद्यालय से अध्ययन कर अपना भविष्य संवार चुकी हैं। यह विद्यालय तमाम सुविधाओं से सुसज्जित है। अनुभवी शिक्षिकाएं बच्चों की मनोस्थिति को समझते हुए, उन्हें शिक्षा देती हैं। विद्यालय में बच्चों के शारीरिक विकास के लिए खेलकूद को समस्त सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं। तमाम सुविधाओं से सुसज्जित यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर है और बोर्ड परीक्षा में शत प्रतिशत रिजल्ट देता आ रहा है। विद्यालय का संचालन कर रही प्रधानाचार्य अनुपमा साह कहती हैं कि यह विद्यालय भविष्य में भी अपना दायित्व बखूबी निभाता रहेगा। प्रबंधक विनय साह के निर्देशन में विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति की ओर अग्रसर है।



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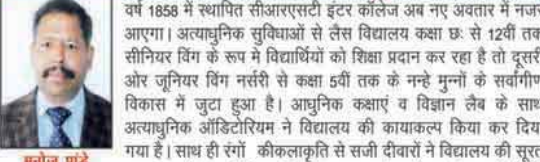
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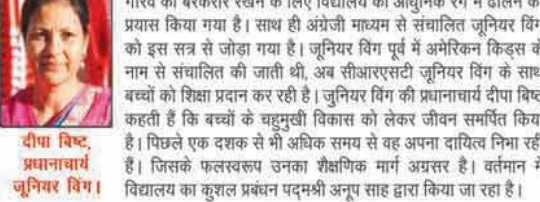
वीना मैसी (प्रधानाचार्य)

बिशप शॉ इंटर कॉलेज उत्तराखंड बोर्ड से सम्बद्ध अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित नगर के अग्रणी विद्यालयों में स्थान रखता है और अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में जुटा हुआ है। विद्यालय प्रबंधन की विशेषता है कि बेहद कम शुल्क में बच्चों को उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा प्रदान कर, शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अपना दायित्व बखूबी निभाता आ रहा है। तल्लीताल क्षेत्र में झील के समीप विद्यालय का वातावरण शिक्षा के माकूल है। विद्यालय प्रबंधक नीलम दानी कहती हैं कि उनका प्रयास विद्यार्थियों को उत्तम शिक्षा प्रदान कर बेहतर भविष्य बनाना है। भविष्य में भी उनका प्रयास जारी रहेगा। प्रधानाचार्य वीना मैसी कहती हैं कि वह वैश्विक शिक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रदान करने में जुटी हुई हैं।

नए अवतार में सीआरएसटी इंटर कॉलेज



मनीष पांडे प्रधानाचार्य



दीपा बिष्ट, प्रधानाचार्य जूनियर विंग

वर्ष 1858 में स्थापित सीआरएसटी इंटर कॉलेज अब नए अवतार में नजर आ रहा है। अत्याधुनिक सुविधाओं से लैस विद्यालय कक्षा 9 से 12वीं तक सीनियर विंग के रूप में विद्यार्थियों को शिक्षा प्रदान कर रहा है तो दूसरी ओर जूनियर विंग नर्सरी से कक्षा 5वीं तक के नन्हे मुन्ने के सर्वांगीण विकास में जुटा हुआ है। आधुनिक कक्षाएं व विज्ञान लेब के साथ अत्याधुनिक ऑडिटोरियम ने विद्यालय की कायाकल्प किया कर दिया गया है। साथ ही रंगों की कलाकृति से सजी दीवारों ने विद्यालय की सूरत बदल डाली है। सीनियर विंग के प्रधानाचार्य मनीष पांडे कहते हैं कि वैश्विक शिक्षा के दौर में खुद को स्थापित करने व विद्यालय के ऐतिहासिक गौरव को बरकरार रखने के लिए विद्यालय को आधुनिक रंग में ढालने का प्रयास किया गया है। साथ ही अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित जूनियर विंग को इस सत्र से जोड़ा गया है। जूनियर विंग पूर्व में अमेरिकन किड्स के नाम से संचालित की जाती थी, अब सीआरएसटी जूनियर विंग के साथ बच्चों को शिक्षा प्रदान कर रही है। जूनियर विंग की प्रधानाचार्य दीपा बिष्ट कहती हैं कि बच्चों के बहुमुखी विकास को लेकर जीवन समर्पित किया है। पिछले एक दशक से भी अधिक समय से वह अपना दायित्व निभा रही हैं। जिसके फलस्वरूप उनका वैश्विक मार्ग अग्रसर है। वर्तमान में विद्यालय का कुशल प्रबंधन पद्मश्री अनुप साह द्वारा किया जा रहा है।

VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

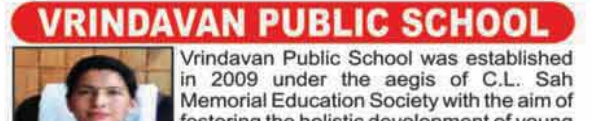
Under the aegis of C.L Sah Memorial Education Society. Regd. 88/2009.



The school also has a centralized heating and cooling system for the convenience of the children. The school has also introduced smart classes.

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VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Vrindavan Public School was established in 2009 under the aegis of C.L. Sah Memorial Education Society with the aim of fostering the holistic development of young learners. As a Playway and Preparatory School, it has successfully nurtured students in both academics and extracurricular activities. The school's clean, green, sunny and spacious environment provides excellent facilities for the physical and mental growth of children, ensuring they develop into bright and confident individuals. This English-medium school is efficiently managed by a team of dedicated staff members under the guidance of the Principal, Mrs. Rakhee Sah. She emphasizes the school's commitment to providing the best possible atmosphere for the all-round development of her beloved students. The school has also introduced smart classes and projectors, enhancing engagement and making learning more interactive for young minds. These advancements help create a dynamic learning environment. Additionally, the school promotes activities that develop gross motor skills, such as Origami, Dance, Taekwondo, and games, which serve as valuable components of a well-rounded physical education program. The school also has a centralized heating and cooling system for the convenience of the children.



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छात्राओं की विशेष पहचान बनाने में इतिहास रचा है ऑलसेंट्स कॉलेज ने

ऑलसेंट्स कॉलेज का गौरवमय इतिहास ब्रिटिश काल से रहा है। इस विद्यालय से हजारों बच्चे शिक्षा प्राप्त कर देश-विदेश में अपना भविष्य संवार चुके हैं। इस विद्यालय में वैश्विक स्तर पर शिक्षा प्रदान की जाती है। वर्तमान में कार्यवाहक प्रधानाचार्य अंजना रिचर्ड्स कुशलतापूर्वक विद्यालय का संचालन कर रही हैं। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित इस विद्यालय की स्थापना 1869 में हुई थी तब से लेकर आज तक यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति की ओर अग्रसर है। देश विदेश के बच्चे इस इस विद्यालय में अध्ययन करने आते हैं। इस विद्यालय से शिक्षा प्राप्त कर दर्जनों छात्राएं विश्व स्तर पर कीर्तिमान स्थापित करने में कामयाब हुई हैं। कार्यवाहक प्रधानाचार्य अंजना रिचर्ड्स कहती हैं कि शिक्षा के मापदंड ध्यान में रखकर गुणवत्ता युक्त शिक्षा प्रदान करने का प्रयास है जिसे भविष्य में भी जारी रखेंगी।




The Pine Crest Elementary School

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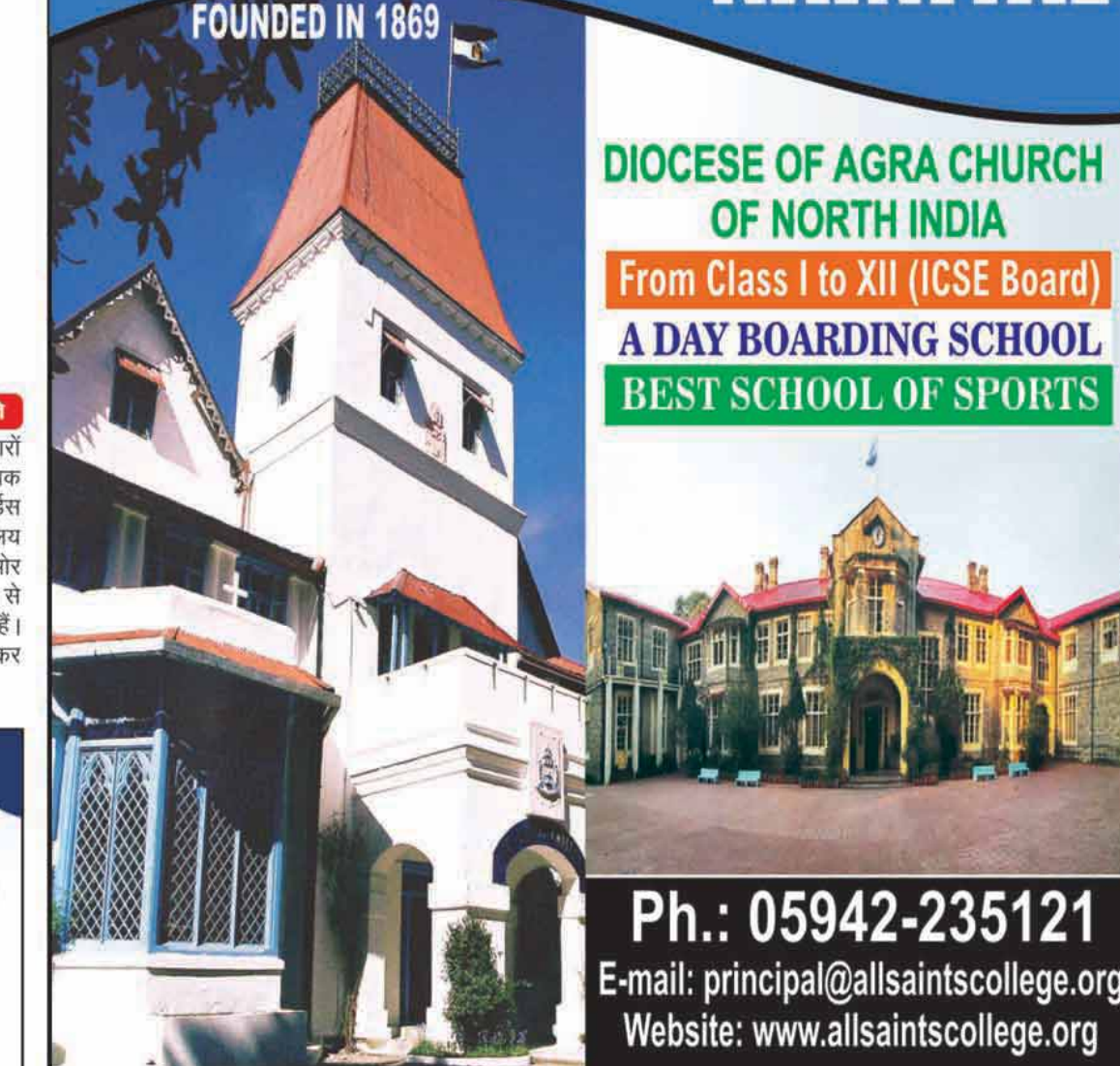
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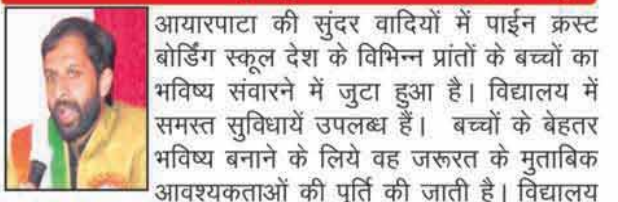
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आयारपट्टा की सुंदर वादियों में पाइन क्रस्ट बोर्डिंग स्कूल देश के विभिन्न प्रांतों के बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में जुटा हुआ है। विद्यालय में समस्त सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं। बच्चों के बेहतर भविष्य बनाने के लिये वह जरूरत के मुताबिक आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति की जाती है। विद्यालय अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित किया जाता है। प्रबन्धक संतोष कुमार कहते हैं कि जिम्मेदारी के साथ अपना दायित्व निभा रहे हैं। विद्यार्थियों का सर्वांगीण विकास उनका लक्ष्य है।