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BHUBANESWAR PUBLISHED FROM: LUCKNOW CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

## TERROR RETURNS TO KASHMIR, TOURISTS MASSACRED

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

**MOHIT KANDHARI** ■ Srinagar

t 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

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 pic-





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)

turesque Baisaran meadow, half-an-hour trek from Pahalgam. In a viral video, one 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 have visited Asia's largest tulip garden in

#### 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

#### 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 perpetrators 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,"

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 offi-

cials also joined the meeting through video conferencing. Mr Shah also spoke to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, they

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

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 Taking exception to Leader of by Government staff and that too in the Opposition and Congress leader presence of authorised representatives ormally appointed by Political Partie 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 0200hrsbut this did not happen," he had said.

## VP escalates attack on SC after BJP

**DEEPAK KUMAR JHA** ■ New Delhi

ice 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 function supreme national interest. He also assert ed 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 Ràjya 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 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

he 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

n 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 twotime 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

From the earthy fragrance of turmeric during the haldi ceremony to the soulful beats of dhol echoing through a fivestar 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

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

### Women outshine men in **UPSC** examination results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

nakti 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 grad-

uate 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 - prelim-

inary, 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 appeared in the test.

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

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.

**Atrocities against** 

### Efforts on to ease traffic woes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

he Traffic department is making several efforts to streamline traffic in the city which includes proposals of road engineering and campaigns against e-rickshaws.

The DCP Traffic, Prabal Pratap Singh said that among the proposals that they had given for the streamlining of the traffic, left turns are being constructed in many parts of the city which have made a difference. "These left turns have been constructed at Hazratganj, Kamta and many other places which has brought about an improvement in the flow of traffic", he said.

The official said that they had made traffic diversions at several points in the city and modifications have been suggested at several rotaries. "The Hahnemann crossing has been reconstructed following our suggestions for improvement," he said.

The official said that they have also made proposals for widening of the road going to the Ekana stadium to ease traffic snarls caused during frequent matches which take place at the stadium.

Meanwhile, talking about the e-rickshaw campaign which was being carried out in the Lucknow district, he said that a verification check showed that there were 57,000 e-rickshaws registered in the district. "These e-rickshaws have been identified and 15,000 e-rickshaws and auto rickshaws have been challaned. Nearly 1,500 have been seized. A campaign is also being taken against e-rickshaws which have no number plates," he added.



**NOTICE** 

My correct name is Ashutosh

Gupta S/o Vishwanath Gunta

akbharpur Kanpur dehat which

is mentioned pen card aadhar

educational Records by mistake policy no.231216762 my name

is mentioned as Shivam Gupta

which is my household name In

future I will be known Ashutosh

Gupta I have completed all legal

formalities regarding the above

**NOTICE** 

I, Gyanwati Devi W/O Ex-

clerk(G.D.) class-I late BHAGWAN SINGH(Army No-

6639855F), R/o-Kallu ka Purwa, Post-ITI via Raebareli District-Raebareli, UP, declare that in my

husband's service documents my

name is wrongly written as

GHYANWATI DEVI, whereas

my correct name is Gyanwati

**NOTICE** 

My correct name is Nisha Tiwari

W/o Kamlesh kumar tiwari R/o

khawajagipur karwan Unnao UP

which is mentioned pen card

aadhar card bank passbook

Records by mistake policy

no.233662783 my name is

mentioned as Neetu tiwari

which is my household name In

future I will be known Nisha

Tiwari I have completed all

legal formalities regarding the

**NOTICE** 

I Manal Yusuf daughter of Yusuf

Husain, declare that my correct date of birth is 31.05.92. And

this shall remain my official Date of birth for any future use.

It was mistakenly printed in my

high school marksheet as

31.09.92 which is not even a

valid date according to the

**NOTICE** 

I have changed my name from

Km.Poonam To Poonam Singh

for all future purpose, Poonam

Singh D/o Budhpal Singh R/o

Vill & Post Maudha, Distt.

**NOTICE** 

I, Shukla Ram Kishor Kashi

Prasad S/o Late Kashi Prasad

Shukla Residing At Flat No.202,

Shristi Suraj Apartment, Kanpur

Nagar- 208007 Have Changed

my name from Shukla Ram

Kishor Kashi Prasad To Ram

Kishor Shukla Vide Affidavit

**NOTICE** 

I am ex-serviceman Prabhakar

Rai son of late Shiv Kumar

resident of village- Babedi, post-

Sohilapur, district- Ghazipur,

Uttar Pradesh. My wife's name

in the Army Education Corps

office records (Indian Army) is

Suman Kumari which is wrong.

The correct name is Suman Rai

which is recorded in the Aadhaar

card and PAN card which is

21.10.2024 At Kanpur Nagar

No.93AE363682

Farrukhabad U.P. 206451

Gregorian calendar.

above by me

card bank

ayodhya nagar

passbook all

#### **NOTICE**

To be Informed that my original allotment and agreement of house no- E 1357-1358 Omaxe city lucknow has been missed which are not mortagage etc- with any bank- Smita saxena wife of sanjay

#### **NOTICE**

#### **Notice**

This is bring to notice that my correct ame is Jitendra Kumar S/o Ram Prata as recorded in my educational documents By mistake my household name Rupesl Yadav has been entered in my Aadhaar card number 3915/6205/1015 which is incorrect. In the future, I should be known and recognized by my correct name litendra Kumar S/o Ram Pratap. This is to certify that all legal formalities related to he above matter have been duly completed by me. Name: Jitendra Kumar Address: Vill.– Mirzapur, Post – Benti, Thana Banthra, District – Lucknow

#### **NOTICE**

I, VISHAL SINGH holder of Indian Passport No: P8071147 issued a DUBAI on 04/12/2016 and Permanent Resident of BUNGLOW NO 70 GUPTAR GHAT ROAD CANTT FAIZABAD U P and presently residing at SHARJAH UAE do hereby change the name of my minor child RUDRA SINGH holding Indian Passport No: T2186650 issued at DUBAI on 24/06/2020 from RUDRA SINGH to HANSRAAJ (Given name) SIINGH (Surname) with immediate effect.

#### Required

M.P.B. Degree College Village Kasmandikala, P.O. Malihabad, District- Lucknow

Required Principal - 01 post, Assistant Professor for the following subjects:-Economics, Education, English Literature, History, Hindi Literature, Political Science, Sociology, Assistant Professor/Professor and for each subject of B.Com. Salary and Qualification:- As per Lucknow bye-laws and UGC standards. E-mail the application to the institution by 30 may E-mail ID: npbpublic@gmail.com

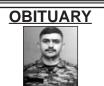
Manager Mrs Anita Singh Pradhan Mobile No. 8081619759

#### **NOTICE**

#### **Public Notice**

. Smt. Meera Singh wife of Shri Jai Bahadur Singh resident of 95, Awas Vikas Colony, Betiyahata, Gorakhpur, U.P., 273001 declare that Allotment letter dated 12.10.2012 and Possession Certificate dated 09.08.2018 of Flat No. 502, Tower No. 9, Sun Breeze Apartment-1, BBD Green City, Lucknow are lost. I am selling the said property to Smt. Punjika Tripathi who wants to make equitable mortgage for loan from SBI Branch-Mahanagar (Branch Code 8189), Lucknow. Regarding the said letters, a police report has been lodged on 22.04.2025 whose LAR number is 20250000269700. If anyone has any objection, please contact the branch manager of SBI, Shri Vijay Singh, Mob. No. 8849870149 within 15 days.

#### **OBITUARY**



14 MAY 1996-22 MAR 2025

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRAN STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED AMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOS OF SEPOY CHURAMANI SAPKOTA WHILE SERVING WITH 326 FIELD

FROM: LT GEN SHIVINDER INGH AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

## Property dealer's wife shoots self

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

**¬**he wife of a property dealer shot herself at her house in Bakshi Ka Talab police station area on Tuesday afternoon. She died at the Trauma Centre of King George's Medical University. The woman, identified as Gunjan Singh, of Nandana Nai Basti locality of Bakshi Ka Talab, shot herself in the chest with the licensed pistol of her husband.

Hearing the gunshot, the family members rushed to the room and found Gunjan lying in a pool of blood. She was admitted to Seva Hospital from where the doctors referred her to the Trauma Centre in view of her critical con-

During treatment, she succumbed to her injury, a police spokesman said, adding that the body was sent for post-mortem and an investi-

case arrested

**¬**he police, on Tuesday, blew the

cover of a minor girl's rapist who had submitted his fake death

certificate in a court to avoid sentence for

the crime committed in Vibhuti Khand

Ramesh alias Sonu Pathak, of Vibhuti

Khand, changed his guise to avoid

coming in police net and also changed

his residence over a dozen of times and

avoided meeting old acquaintances, the

Sushil, who hails from Haraiyya in

Basti, was wanted in connection with a

case registered under sections 363/366/376 of IPC and POCSO Act, in

The accused went underground after

his name figured in police diary and did

not appear in the court even after the

police filed the charge-sheet, seeking

permission of court for attachment of his

property and a non-bailable warrant

against him. The NBW and an order for as dead.

The accused, identified as Sushil alias

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

police station area.

police said.

'Dead' accused in rape

Preliminary investigation by the police revealed that before shooting herself, Gunjan had sent a message to her husband, Atul Singh, who had contested the civic election from ward number 13 in Nandana village. After that, Atul reached home and there was some dispute between the couple and she shot herself.

In the preliminary investigation, a family dispute has come to the fore as a reason for her taking the extreme step.

Twenty-nine-year-old Gunjan, a native of Tikaitganj in Barabanki, was married to Atul Singh nine years ago. She has left behind her husband and a 7-year-old daughter.

#### **JOURNALIST ENDS LIFE**

attachment of his property under sections 82/83 of CrPC were issued

To avoid his arrest and punishment,

the accused got his fake death certificate

submitted in the court and remained

absconding. On receiving the death

certificate of the accused, the court asked

the police to verify it.

The police found the death certificate

to be fake after visiting his native home

in Basti and informed the court about it.

The court then ordered immediate arrest

team was formed by DCP (East and a

reward of Rs 20,000 was also announced

on the accused. Subsequently, on

came to light that the accused had been

absconding by hiding his identity to

avoid arrest after submitting a fake death

certificate in the court. He confessed that

he thought he would avoid punishment

as the case would be closed, treating him

During interrogation after his arrest, it

Tuesday the accused was arrested.

In compliance with the court's order, a

against him by the court.

Meanwhile, a senior journalist, Manmohan

Singh, currently working with a public relations agency, ended his life in his house in Indira Nagar

ere on Tuesday morning. Manmohan Singh lived with his wife and 3year-old son and other members in his family.

Quoting family members, a police spokesman said Manmohan Singh was in depression for the last several years due to some disease and he hanged himself to death between 2 and 2:15 am on Tuesday.

He was rushed to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital after the family members saw him hanging from the ceiling, the spokesman said.

The police are trying to find out other possible reasons which could have compelled the senior journalist to take the extreme step.

It is said that Manmohan Singh had attempted suicide on 2-3 occassions in the past also. However, this was not confirmed by the family.

### Old man killed by daughter-in-law, lover in Bulandshahr

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

n old man was killed after he caught his daughter-inlaw in a compromising position with a local youth in

The sensational killing took place in Chaudhary Khel locality under Dibai police station of the district. The deceased was identified as 62-year-old Rajveer Singh.

It is being said that Rajveer Singh had seen his daughterin-law in a compromising position with her lover, after which the whole incident took a horrific turn.

According to the police, Rajveer Singh's daughter-in-law was having an affair with a youth, identified as Pawan from the neighbourhood. Rajveer had opposed this relationship many times and tried to convince his daughter-in-law, but she and Pawan did not stop meeting.

It is said that Monday late evening, Pawan had secretly entered the house when Rajveer Singh caught both of them red-handed. On this, the daughter-in-law and Pawan together killed him.

The family members of the deceased have lodged a report in Dibai police station. The police have started an investigation. The actions of Pawan have been captured in the CCTV camera installed in the house. On the basis of the footage, the police are searching for him.

### Dalits worrisome, says Mayawati PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

🕤 ahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati Bon Tuesday expressed concern over the alleged incidents of atrocities against Dalits and desecration of statues of their icons, warning that if strict action is not taken against the offenders, the affected communities will never forgive the authorities.

In a post on X, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo said, "During the birth anniversary celebrations of Bharat Ratna and Constitution-maker Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, incidents of desecration of his statues and attacks by feudal elements on rallies and programmes in several states were extremely shameful. These events exposed the double standards of the governments." Referring specifically to the violence in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district, Mayawati termed the killing of a Dalit youth reportedly during an Ambedkar Jayanti procession and the injuries sustained by several others "highly condemnable".

Alleging that the lack of strict action against the culprits raises questions about the role of the state government, Mayawati said, "The government's complicity in the matter cannot be ruled out." She also urged both the Centre and all state governments to take these incidents with utmost seriousness.

"If strict measures are not taken to stop the atrocities against Dalits and to prevent the disrespect of their great saints, gurus and icons, these communities will never forgive the authorities," she warned.

"These caste-based incidents make it clear that the programmes organised by the central and state governments on occasions like Ambedkar Jayanti are nothing but a deceptive move to woo Dalit voters," she alleged.

She also appealed to Dalits to stay alert and not fall for the "double-faced character and tactics" of such political

### BMW involved in Talkatora accident had 9 challans

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

ine challans for violation of traffic rules had been issued against the black BMW car been issued against the chief involved in a road accident in Talkatora on Sunday night, five of them for over speeding.

The car originally belonged to a Haryana native and it was sold to a Lucknow resident who is yet to get the vehicle transferred in his name. The police are trying to find the man who was driving the car at the time of the accident.

who were on a motorcycle near MIS police outpost in Rajajipuram. While the youth riding the two-wheeler was flung 10 feet away, his mother had got stuck in the chassis of the car and was dragged for about 400 metres. The driver fled with the car.

Police investigation has revealed that the car was challaned nine times before it was sold to a Lucknow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

According to Talkatora Inspector Kuldeep Dubey,

digital marketer was arrested, on Tuesday, for

sexually exploiting a woman while promising

to marry her and fleecing her of Rs 3.5 lakh and

ornaments from her in Sushant Golf City police sta-

tion area. The accused has also been accused of abus-

According to police, on Monday, a woman filed a

complaint, accusing one Vikalp Srivastava of Kanpur

of having physical relations with her by deceiving her

with the promise of marriage, taking Rs 3.5 lakh and

After a case was registered, the police started to hunt

for the accused and nabbed him from near

Dhoudankheda intersection in Sushant Golf City police

The police earlier had collected evidence against the

ing the woman and threatening to kill her.

jewellery from her, and on other counts.

**CIMAP** scripts

success story

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

use of the fertilisers.

Digital marketer held for

a case has been registered on the basis of the complaint of the deceased woman's son, Subhash, and the car driver is being searched on the basis of the car's registration number.

Sources in the police said the car's image was captured by the CCTV at one place near the accident site. Ram Gopal Lodhi of Shekhupur in Thakurganj had

gone to the wedding of a relative's daughter on Sunday, along with his wife Rajrani (60) and son Subhash. Rajrani was returning home late at night with her son by motorcycle after attending the wedding ceremony Vikram Cotton Mill when a black BA ing from behind hit the two-wheeler near MIS police outpost Rajajipuram.

As Subhash fell due to the impact of the collision, Rajrani got stuck under the chassis of the car. The driver did not stop after the accident and instead accelerated the car, dragging the woman stuck under the car's chassis for about 400 metres. While fleeing, the car bounced over a speed breaker and the woman's body got detached from it.

### Bangladeshi infiltrator held on Nepal border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA 

Maharajganj

32-year-old Bangladeshi national was arrested at the Indo-Nepal border here for allegedly crossing over to India without visa and passport, a senior official said on Tuesday. Superintendent of Police Somendra Meena said that the Bangladeshi national was arrested on

to India illegally. Pradeep Kumar Roy, who was on his way to India from Nepal, was arrested by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in the Nichlaul area. Officials did not find visa papers and

passport with him, Meena said. The SP said that legal action is being taken against the Bangladeshi nation-

IDFC FIRST Bank

#### **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**

sently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)

CIN: L65110TN2014PLC097792

5 JYOTI CHANDRA

Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031 Tel: +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

The following borrowers and co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) The loans of the below-mentioned borrowers and co-borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loan were classified as NPA as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) are mentioned as per respective notices issued more particularly described in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be applicable and the same will be charged as per contractual rate with effect from their respective dates.

Sr No.	Account No.	Type of Loan	Section 13 (2) Notice Date	per Section 13 (2) Notice
1	36354739	LOAN AGAINST PROPERTY	15.02.2025	7,85,401.88/-
NAME (	OF BORROWERS AN	CO-BORROWERS : 1 ATUI CHAI	NDRA 2. PREM CHA	NDRA 3 SHEELA PREM

PROPERTY ADDRESS: PROPERTY 1: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY RESIDENTIAL HOUSE ON EWS PLOT NO. SS-3/710. ADMEASURING 30 SQ. MTR., I.E. 323 SQ. FT., SECTOR H JANKIPURAM WARD-II SITAPUR ROAD YOJINA WARD JANKIPURAM JUCKNOW LITTAR PRADESH

226021, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: PLOT NO. 3/711, WEST: PLOT NO. 3/709, NORTH: PLOT NO. 3/716 & 3/717, SOUTH: 6 MTR. WIDE ROAD. PROPERTY 2: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY RESIDENTIAL HOUSE ON EWS PLOT NO. SS-3/709, ADMEASURING 30 SQ. MTR., I.E. 323 SQ. FT., SECTOR H, JANKIPURAM -I, SITAPUR

ROAD, YOJNA WARD JANKIPURAM, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226021, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST PLOT NO. 3/708, WEST: PLOT NO. 3/710, NORTH: PLOT NO. 3/716 & 3/717 (P), SOUTH: 6 MTR, WIDE ROAD, TOTAL PROPERTY 1 & PROPERTY 2 ADMEASURING 60 SQ. MTRS.I.E. 646 SQ. FT.

No.	Account No.	Loan	Notice Date	per Section 13 (2) Notice
2	122969757	HOME LOAN	05.04.2025	15,75,805.23/-
MARKE	OF DODDOWEDO AND OC	POPPOWERS A PANICA	LONA DAMANOUD O L	IOLIA MICUIDA

NAME OF BORROWERS AND CO-BORROWERS: 1. PANKAJ SIYA RAM MISHR 2. USHA MISHRA PROPERTY ADDRESS: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF RESIDENTIAL HOUSE BUILT ON PART OF PLOT

ON. 9, OVER KHASRA NO.196 MIN, ADMEASURING 600 SQ. FT. I.E. 55.762 SQ. MTRS., SITUATED AT GRAM: GAZIPUR BALRAM, WARD: FAIZULLAGANJ, TEHSIL & DISTRICT: LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226020, AND BOUNDED AS:- EAST: HOUSE OF NEERAJ MISHRA, WEST: PLOT NO. 8, NORTH: OTHER PLOT SOUTH: 17 FT. WIDE ROAD

Sr No.	Account No.	Type of Loan	Section 13 (2) Notice Date	per Section 13 (2) Notice
3	116662246	HOME LOAN	05.04.2025	18,18,200.14/-
NAME	OF BORROWERS AND CO	-BORROWERS : 1. SHIVA	CHAUHAN 2. POONAM	CHAUHAN

PROPERTY ADDRESS: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OFHOUSE BUILT ON PART OF PLOT OVER KHASRA NO. 196 MIN, AREA600 SQ. FT. I.E. 55.762 SQ MTS, SITUATED AT GRAM: GAZIPUR BALRAM, WARD: FAIZULLAGANJ, TEHSIL & DISTRICT: LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH- 226008, AND BOUNDED AS: EAST: HOUSE OF PHOOLKUMARI, WEST: ARAZI DIGAR, NORTH: 17 FEET WIDE RAASTA, SOUTH: 18 FEET WIDE RAASTA

You are hereby called upon to pay the amounts to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited as per the details shown in the above table with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc. within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to initiate proceedings, under Section 13 (4) and section 14 of the SARFAESI Act, against the mortgaged properties mentioned hereinabove to realize the amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited). Further you are prohibited under Section 13 (13) of the said Act from transferring the said secured assets either by way of sale/lease or

> IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

Date: 23.04.2025 Place: UTTAR PRADESH

# मध्यप्रदेश लघु उद्योग निगम मर्यादित

क्र. : लउनि /निर्माण/सं/नि/इन्दौर/2025/88

he CSIR-CIMAP has scripted a success story with its sustainable aroma cluster in established recently in Barabanki. The yield of the farmers has increased with a substantial decrease in the

Spokesperson CIMAP Dr Manoj Semwal said the sustainable cluster of mints involved cultivating CIM-Unnati variety of menthol mint by more than 3200 farmers in Barabanki. "CIM-Unnati variety is resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses protecting the crop from untimely rains at the time of maturity. Agri-technique of Early Mint Technology was deployed to save water and costs involved in weeding. Further, precision agriculture techniques directing timely and spot directed use of pesticides and nutrients involving UAV (drones) were demonstrat ed in more than 500 acres," he said.

कार्यालय महाप्रबंधक (सं./नि.) **न्नज़न्न** 3, पोलोग्राउण्ड इंदौर (म.प्र.) दिनांक: 11.04.2025

tim through a common contact.

निम्न कार्यों की निविदा ई-टेण्डिंग पद्धित से वेबसाइट https://www.

(1) इंदौर इंटरनेशनल मेगा फर्निचर क्लस्टर ग्राम बेटमाखर्द, तहसील देपालपर, जिला इंदौर में सी.सी. सड़क, ह्यम पाइप कल्वर्ट, आर.सी.सी. सतही नाली, मेटल बुम बेरियर एवं लेण्ड डेव्हलपमेंट कार्य लागत राशि रु. 1301.69

ह्मम पाइप कल्वर्ट एवं आर.सी.सी. सतही नाली निर्माण कार्य लागत राशि रु.

पास सुरक्षित है।

sexually exploiting woman accused. Vikalp Srivastava confessed to his crime before the police. The police spokesman said Vikalp was in digital marketing and he came in contact with the vic-

> Meanwhile, two youths were arrested for harassing a girl and making an attempt to molest her near Dariyawali Mosque in Chowk, on Tuesday, two days after a video showing their act went viral on social media on Sunday night.

> In the viral video, two youths riding a motorcycle were seen committing indecent acts and also attempting to molest the girl who was travelling all alone on a scooty at about 11:25 pm on April 20.

A team was formed to identify and arrest the unknown accused. On Tuesday, the team tracked down the miscreants and arrested them, a spokesman said. He said the arrested accused were identified as

Mohammed Afaq of Thakurganj and Riyaz of Chowk.

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

mptenders.gov.in पर आमंत्रित की जाती है :-

औद्योगिक क्षेत्र अल्कोहल प्लान्ट, रतलाम, जिला-रतलाम में सी.सी. सड़क,

निविदा की समस्त जानकारी उक्त वेबसाइट पर देखी जा सकती है। यदि निविदा में कोई संशोधन व परिवर्तन किया जाता है तो उसे उपरोक्त वेबसाइट पर देखा जा सकता है, इसे पृथक से समाचार-पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा। बिना कोई कारण बताये निविदा स्वीकृत करने अथवा निरस्त करने का अधिकार निगम के

म.प्र. माध्यम/119669/2025 महाप्रबंधक (सं./नि.)

# UPSC achievers in city on cloud nine

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

ivil services aspirants in Lucknow who cracked the Union Public Services Commission exam-✓ ination were on cloud nine after the results were declared on Tuesday afternoon.

Twenty-six-year-old Prashant Singh, who secured the 102 rank, was elated. He said this was his fourth attempt. Son of a Provincial Civil Services officer, Prashant has done his graduation from Delhi University with history and political science. He did his post-graduation from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) because he wanted to concentrate on the preparation for the civil services exam-

"I always wanted to crack the civil services examination. In the first two attempts I did not clear the prelims and in the third attempt I reached the interview stage but did not make it to the final list," he said.

Prashant said that with this rank he would get either IAS, IFS or IPS. "I have opted for foreign services,"

He admitted that there was no other success mantra except to work hard for cracking this examination. "I had failed in my earlier attempts and so I simply decided to work till I got through the examination," he said. Prashant said he was attracted by the civil services after watching the hard work put in by his father, who would remain out of the house for long hours during the COVID-19 times.

Prashant said that his time table during the preparations was very generic. "I would wake up early and



Anushree Sachan

read the newspaper and then sit down to study in slots of two to three hours. I would study for eight hours a day. Earlier I was studying for more than eight hours but that was not working for me and I decided not to overdo it. Except for my optionals, I did not take coaching," he added.

He said that he was keen on policy-making which attracted him a lot. "If I am in IFS, I will do whatever the country asks me and if I am offered IAS cadre, I will focus on policy-making," he said. Regarding how he kept himself motivated during the four years of preparation, he said that earlier he never used to read books but later he read books on emotional intelligence and how to keep himself motivated during tough times.

Anushree Sachan from Lucknow who cracked the examination and secured the 220 rank, said she was elated and euphoric. "All of us are very happy that we are experiencing something new. It is a great feeling, very surreal and it will take time to settle in," she said.

Talking about her success mantra, Anushree said it was discipline, patience and consistency. "I put in eight hours on an average but I believe in quality over quantity so irrespective of the number of hours I put in my whole motive was that whenever I studied, I put in my hundred per cent efficiency," she said.

An engineer by profession, Anushree said she was attracted to the civil services during her stint in the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai. "I joined the NSS (National Service Scheme) and taught the underprivileged children at IIT Mumbai. This gave me my first taste in public services," she said.

She said that with this rank she would either get IRS or IPS. "If I get IPS I would work on maintaining law and order, particularly in the area of women safety because I have a clear cut soft corner for women. If I get the IRS cadre, I would focus on tax evasion, which is my area of interest," she added.

Talking about her message to the civil services aspirants, Anushree said that one had to be patient, consistent and industrious. "Consistency is important because one has to do the same thing over and over again, which makes it boring and demotivating. One should understand that one has to keep repeating it because that will lead to success and nothing else," she said. She said that her parents kept her inspired and motivated. "They were my cheer leaders and that is why I did not get demotivated and was able to sail through my tough times," she said.

### Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana makes history 13 students achieve success, bring laurels to state

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

hief Minister Yogi Adityanath's visionary initiative, the Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Coaching Yojana, has once again caught everyone's attention with its impressive results. In the final result of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Civil Services Examination 2024, 13 meritorious students studying under this scheme achieved success and increased the prestige of Uttar Pradesh.

Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana is proving to be a milestone for the poor and underprivileged students of Uttar Pradesh. This scheme empowers the students to become self-reliant by providing high-quality education and coaching.

With this visionary initiative of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the dreams of thousands of state students are coming true, and they are moving towards a bright future. By joining this scheme run by the Social Welfare Department of the state, the students studied in the centres of Abhyudaya Coaching to prepare for competitive examinations, and now the success of 13 promising students in the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024 has emerged as a strong example of CM Yogi's objective.

A total of 166 Abhyudaya Coaching Centres are operating in all 75 state districts. Shagun Kumar, a student of Hapur Centre has secured 100th rank in the Civil Services Examination 2024, while Mayank Bajpai (Sitapur) got 149th rank. Ayush Jaiswal (Bareilly) succeeded with 178th rank and Aditi Dubey (Lucknow) with 180th rank. Saumya Sharma (Pratapgarh) with 218th rank, Prateek Mishra (Ayodhya) with 821st rank and Nancy Singh

### **CM** congratulates students, parents

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

hief Minister Yogi Adityanath congratulated all the successful candidates and their parents ✓on passing the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Civil Services Examination 2024. Through a social media post, CM Yogi extended many congratulations to Shakti Dubey, the daughter of the state, who has topped in the country in the prestigious competition.

The chief minister said: "We are confident that all of you will help build a 'Viksit Bharat' by discharging your duties with the resolve of 'Nation First, strong public devotion, and an unwavering service spirit." He wished all the successful candidates for a bright future.

(Prayagraj) with 234th rank and Anchal Anand (Gautam Buddha Nagar) with 399th rank have brought laurels to the state. Apart from this, Ashwani Shukla (Jalaun) was 423rd rank, Udit Kumar Singh (Prayagraj) with 668th rank, Disha Dwivedi (Lucknow) with 672nd rank, Manish Kumar (Lucknow) with 748th rank, Himanshu Mohan

(Lucknow) with 970th rank are a testament to the success of Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana.

The success of these candidates is proof of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's thinking, in which talent is not allowed to bow down due to a lack of resources. 'Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Coaching Scheme' is not only an educational platform but has become a revolutionary initiative that gives wings to the dreams of the state's youth.

Social Welfare Minister (Independent Charge) Asim Arun said the Yogi government is making consistent efforts to promote talented children from poor and

deprived sections. He added, "The Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Yojana is the result of that effort."

While congratulating all the candidates who have been successful in UPSC Civil Services, he said that 280 candidates are preparing to take the PCS Mains exam in the coaching centres run under the Abhyudaya Yojana. Further, facilities and arrangements will be expanded in this coaching.

The Social Welfare Department Director, Kumar Prashant, has expressed happiness over the scheme's success. Congratulating the candidates selected for the civil service, he said that the objective of the Mukhyamantri Abhyudaya Coaching Scheme is for talented youth from remote and economically weaker sections of the state to get the same opportunities that are available in big cities.

"Today, the selection of 13 of our children in a prestigious exam like UPSC proves that no destination is far if the right guidance and resources are given. This is a proud moment for all of us", he remarked.

#### **AKY insulted Dalits while in** power: Arun

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

→he state's Social Welfare Minister and former IPS officer Asim Arun, on Tuesday, sharply criticised Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav, calling him a "symbol of divisive politics". Arun alleged that during his tenure as Chief Minister, Akhilesh Yadav went to great lengths to humiliate Dalits, and it was this very mindset that led to his political downfall. "The public has completely rejected such politics, pushing him to the margins," Arun remarked.

Arun called Akhilesh Yadav's recent statements a part of a calculated political strategy. "Most SP leaders have been instructed to create social division to spoil it. But today, the people of Uttar Pradesh are alert and aware," he said. Quoting Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, he added, "Batoge To Katoge, Ek Rahoge, To Safe Rahoge". This government believes in inclusive governance."

Arun also questioned SP's sudden concern for Dalits, claiming it only emerged after the party lost power. He accused Akhilesh Yadav of disrespecting

Dalit icons during his tenure by renaming districts and institutions that honored them. "Names like Bhim Nagar, Mahamaya Nagar, Jyotiba Phule, Sant Ravidas. and even Lord Buddha's mother Mahamaya were removed. Is this respect? No — this is an insult to social consciousness," he said.

Drawing from his experience as a former IPS officer, Arun made a significant allegation: "During the SP regime, officers from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were denied postings at police stations and tehsils, in violation of rules." He emphasised that postings are now made on merit under the Yogi government. "Those who are incompetent face action, while hardworking officers receive training and

Highlighting the achievements under the current administration, Arun said Uttar Pradesh has witnessed record progress in scholarship distribution. "Under CM Yogi Adityanath's leadership, scholarships worth over ₹4,000 crore have been distributed this year, benefiting 56 lakh students. In contrast, the SP government covered only 34 lakh students, and even then,

scholarship scams were rampant," he said. Arun also alleged that in 2017, sensing electoral defeat, Akhilesh Yadav halted student scholarships. "After taking office, CM Yogi ensured continuity by releasing funds for two financial years in one go."

On the Kanpur Metro inauguration, Arun dismissed SP's claims of initiating every project. "Akhilesh Yadav is under the illusion that every development initiative started with him. The truth is that the Yogi government has mobilised resources transparently — whether through GST collection or mining. People now pay taxes honestly, enabling projects like the metro to move for-

Concluding his remarks, Arun expressed confidence in the BJP's future electoral prospects. "The people gave us a historic mandate in 2017 and again in 2022. We're confident of similar support in upcoming elections. Today, the rule of law prevails in Uttar Pradesh, drinking water is reaching every household, government schools are improving, and the remaining gaps are being systematically addressed."

### AKY reiterates claims of bias Youth accused of raping,

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** ■ Lucknow

day after Uttar Pradesh DGP Prashant Kumar dismissed allegations of caste-based postings in the police force as "baseless and misleading", Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday doubled down on his claims and said the DGP should speak less and allow the chief minister to respond.

"DGP sahab should speak less; at the very least, the chief minister should address this. We have only revealed the state of a few districts so far," Yadav said at a press conference in Lucknow on Tuesday. "As an opposition party, it is our duty to stay alert and question the injustices being done to PDA (Backward, Dalit, and Minority communities). That's what we're doing — fulfilling our democratic responsibility," he added. SP chief accused the Yogi Adityanath government of systematically discriminating against marginalised communities in public service appointments. He reiterated that the data he cited, including lists of officers posted in the UP Special Task Force (STF) and district-level police stations in Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, Mahoba and Agra, was sourced from official websites.

"These are not numbers I have created. These are from government websites," he said, showing screenshots and printed copies of the official data to the media.

Responding to the state government's rejec-

tion of his claims, Yadav questioned why political leaders were hiding behind bureaucrats. Yadav also accused the state government of manipulating police posting data. "In the list of police stations, non-field stations like those for human trafficking or tourism are being added to artificially inflate the figures," he alleged.

On the broader issue of public employment, Yadav targeted the Agnipath recruitment scheme and the contractual nature of other government jobs.

"The Agniveer scheme does not offer permanent employment. On top of that, there is discrimination against Shiksha Mitras, ASHA workers and Anganwadi staff," he said. Yadav also expressed concern over rising unemployment and shrinking opportunities in Uttar Pradesh. "... the government keeps coming up with new schemes to hide the unemployment. People are not getting jobs as per their qualifications. Salaries are low, and women are working in an unsafe environment," he remarked. He further alleged that political ideology had seeped into education and appointments. "From the top to bottom, appointments are being made only if you are affiliated with a certain ideology. Otherwise, you don't get hired," Yadav said. The SP chief also claimed that under the BJP education is getting privatised at a rapid pace and the fees is skyrocketing. It is being done to keep poor children from villages deprived of education, he alleged.

# cheating girl of ₹5.16L

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

vouth has been accused of raping a girl after promising A raping a girl and relating her to marry her and cheating her of ₹5.16 lakh in Chinhat. The victim and the accused had met through a matrimonial site last year. The accused, identified as Aarav Kaushik, runs a restaurant in Chinhat.

As per reports, the family of the victim girl was looking for a suitable groom for her and contacted the family of the accused after going through his profile on a matrimonial site.

According to the victim, a resident of Gudamba, Aarav befriended her by his sweet talks and his politeness towards women. The victim said she had several rounds of talk with Aarav, who showed his eagerness to marry her. During their conversation, Aarav allegedly told the victim that he was unmarried and promised to marry her. After this both families met one another and gave their consent for finalising the relationship.

In early 2024, the youth got a job

in Dubai and the girl also visited Dubai to meet him. On visiting Dubai, the girl learnt that Aarav was already married. When she confronted him, Aarav told her that he would marry her after giving divorce to his first wife. Not only this, Aarav's mother talked to her several times and persuaded her to marry Aarav after his divorce from his wife.

"During this time, Aarav and his mother took Rs 5.16 lakh by emotionally blackmailing me. They said they would pay this money as fee to the lawyer handling Aarav's divorce case," the victim alleged.

She further said that after returning from Dubai in December 2024, Aarav opened a restaurant in Chinhat where he forced her to have physical relations with him several times. She said Aarav and his mother later turned down the marriage proposal. According to Chinhat police, an FIR has been registered on the basis of the complaint filed by the girl and the police are collecting evidence against the accused and his

EASTER MILAN ORGANISED: Easter Milan was organised with the joint efforts of all churches of Lucknow at the grounds of Christ Church College on Tuesday. The opening prayer was conducted by Rev EF Baksh of Epiphany Church followed by a special prayer in memory of Pope Francis by Bishop Dr Gerald J Mathais Bishop of Catholic Diocese. The congregation observed a moment of silence reflecting on the life and legacy of Pope Francis.



PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramal Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai- 400 070. CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639, Webside:www.piramalfinance.com Branch Address: Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602.

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, profice is berefyington, one again to the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) than 19 CHFL within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) the s

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Loan Code	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Property address
(LC No. 06000003279 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Barmeshwar Singh Kushwaha (Borrower) Sunaina Singh Kushwaha (Co Borrower 1)	Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 926809 /-(₹ Nine lakh Twenty Six Thousand Eight Hundred Nine Only) NPA (10-03-2025)	Plot No 185, Khasra No 108, Village- Devaria, Pargana & Tehsil Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh:- 226001
(LC No. 06000009158 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Mod Man (Borrower) mohammad Ashraf Khan (Co Borrower 1) Talbeeda Bano (Co Borrower 2) Mohammad Akhtar Khan (Co Borrower 3)	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 17106569 /-(₹ One Crore Seventy One lakh Six Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Nine Only) NPA (10-03-2025)	Shop Nos.F-1/5, UG-1/B, UG-1/A, UGF-2, UG- UG-4, UG-5, UG-6, UG-7, Love Lane, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, Hazaratganj, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh - 226001
(LC No. 09700008850 of Dehradun Branch) Suraj Gusain (Borrower) Urmila Devi (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. 12000004424 of Varanasi Branch) Surendra S (Borrower) Pramila Devi (Co	Dt: 24-03-2025 /\$ 687806 /-{\$ Six lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Six Only) NPA (10-03-2025) Dt: 24-03-2025 /\$ 607427 /-{\$ Six lakh Seven Thousand Four Hundred Twenty	Khata No 1152 Khasra No 122/94min Mauza Central East Hope Town Pargana Pachwadoon Dehradun Dehradun Uttaranchal :- 248001 Arazi No. 71/13, Mauza Parshurampur, Paragn Mawai, Chandauli Chandauli Uttar Pradesh
Borrower 1) (LC No. 19300042239 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) Somendra Kumar Awasthi (Borrower) Rachna Awasthi (Co	Seven Only) NPA (10-03-2025)  Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 2706793 /-(₹ Twenty Seven lakh Six Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Three Only) NPA (10-03-2025)	:- 232101 House On Plot No 3 And 4 Ka Bhag Part Of Kh No 180 Shekhpur, Habibpur, Ward Saadatganj Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh :- 226017
Borrower 1) (LC No. 23400000314 of Agra Branch) Mohd Shariq Ahmad Farooqi (Borrower) Haseenuddin (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. 25500001345 of Delhi - Pitampura	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1538452 /-(₹ Fifteen lakh Thirty Eight Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Two Only) NPA (10-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1243907 /-(₹ Twelve lakh	House No. 4/774, Friends Colony Near Friend Apartment Dodhpur Aligarh Aligarh Uttar Pradesh: - 202001 Flat No- Ff-3, First FIr Front Side Rhs Plot No-9
Branch) Rohit Sharma (Borrower) Arti Sharma (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. 25700001796 of Gorakhpur Branch) Dayanand Gupta (Borrower) Akash Gupta (Co Borrower 1)	Forty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Seven Only) NPA (10-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /* 2192859.52 /-(* Twenty One lakh Ninety Two Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Nine Only and Fifty Two	Block-a, Dlf Ankur Vihar, Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh :- 201010 Flat No. UGF-1, Upper Ground Floor, Front RHS Plot No MM-35, Dlf Ankur Vihar, Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh :- 201002
(LC No. 26100000511 of Jhansi Branch) lay Narayan Singh Yadav (Borrower) Priyanka Yadav (Co Borrower 1) Prem Narain Yadav (Guarantor 1)	Paise) NPA (10-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 510037 /-(₹ Five lakh Ten Thousand Thirty Seven Only) NPA (10-03-2025)	Plot No-10 Block A, Arazi No-376 Min Mauza Sijwaha Jhansi, Subhashish Enclave Behind Karodhi Mata Mandir Jhansi Jhansi Uttar Pradesh: - 284001
(LC No. 28200000208 of Noida - Sector 2 Branch) Rishabh Kumar (Borrower) Ritika Sanjeev Kumar Jha (Co Borrower 1)	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1503784 /-{₹ Fifteen lakh Three Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Four Only) NPA (10-03-2025)	Flat No 8-2 First Floor Front R.h.s. Plot No 481 Shalimar Garden Extension-1 Village-pasonda Loni Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh :- 201005
(LC No. BLSA00017B38 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) CHETAN KUMAR (Borrower) RINU (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. BLSA00022038 of Basti Branch) Satyadev (Borrower) URMILA PANDEY (Co	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1981932 /-(₹ Nineteen lakh Eighty One Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Two Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1158410 /-(₹ Eleven lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Four Hundred Ten	Khata no 00142, Kjhet No 02, Village Junedpu Pargana Dankaur Gautam budh nagar Bulandshahar UttarPradesh 203201 Arazi no 222, Mauja padri Tappa Kanaila Parg. Nagar Purab Tehsil Near shiv mandir, Basti
Borrower 1) (LC No. BLSA00029DE8 of Muzaffarnagar - Bhopa Road Branch) VIKAS KUMAR (Borrower) MEENA DEVI (Co Borrower 1)	Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 1182446.11 /-(₹ Eleven lakh Eighty Two Thousand Four Hundred Forty Six Only and Eleven Paise) NPA (05-03-2025)	Uttar Pradesh 272301 H no 39, Mohalla Devi mandir, Near Kasba Un Nagar, Dist Shamli, Muzzafarnagar Uttar Prade 247778
(LC No. HLSA00068182 of Lucknow - MMM Marg Branch) MOHAMMAD ZAHEER (Borrower) JAINUM KHATOON (Co Borrower 1)	Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 1627775 /-{₹ Sixteen lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Five Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	House built over plot no 19, Only being portion of Khasra no 93, Near Innovation public school Vill Iohramau Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226020
SINGH (Co Borrower 1) ADARSH SINGH	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1574777 /-(₹ Fifteen lakh Seventy Four Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Seven Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 1512079 /-(₹ Fifteen lakh Twether Thousand Seventy Nine Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 715468 /-(₹ Seven lakh Fifteen Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Eight Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	House No.1/483, Khet No.174, Kookadi Kheda @ Aurangabad, Near Goldi Tailor, Pargana & Tehsil Koil, Dist- Aligarh, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesl House No.1/483, Khet No.174, Kookadi Kheda @ Aurangabad, Near Goldi Tailor, Pargana & Tehsil Koil, Dist- Aligarh, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesl Arazi no 1128, Nearest nidhi beauty parlour, Varanasi Uttar Pradesh 221003
(Co Borrower 2) (LC No. BLSA0001D3AE of Delhi Branch) SALMAN (Borrower) SHAHNAZ (Co Borrower 1) AASIF (Co Borrower 2) (LC No. BLSA00020090 of Deoria Branch) Rahul (Borrower) NIKKI RAIBHAR (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. BLSA0002763D of Gonda Branch)	Dt:24-03-2025 /\$ 777327 /-(\$ Seven lakh Seventy Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Seven Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /\$ 2144921 /-(\$ Twenty One lakh Forty Four Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty One Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /\$ 547046 /-(\$ Five lakh	Mohalla Abdulla Purwa Watd no 21, Kasba Bil pargana Billari Near Ashrafi masjid Moradaba Uttar Pradesh 244001 Arazi no 483, Near Swami Devanand mahavidyalay Lar Deoria Uttar Pradesh 27450 Gata no 319, Gram Khanpur Balpur Hajari Gor
Sandeep Kumar Gupta (Borrower) JANKI (Co Borrower 1) (LC No.BLSA00027D0B of Kashipur Branch) MAMTA (Borrower) RITIK PAWAR (Co	Dt. 24-03-2025 / ₹ 339185 /-(₹ Three lakh Thirty Nine Thousand One Hundred Eighty	Uttar Pradesh 271125  Khasra no 105min, Wake Gram Chandrapur Tehsil Kashipur Near Shiv Mandir Udhamsingl
Borrower 1) (LC No. BLSA0003761C of Delhi - Shahdara Branch) AADIL (Borrower) SHAIDA (Co Borrower 1)	Five Only) NPA (05-03-2025)  Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 1546714 /-(₹ Fifteen lakh Forty Six Thousand Seven Hundred Fourteen Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Nagar Uttarakhand 244713 Khasra no 13 & 14 Village Fatehullapur Pargan Single storey house Milan Palace, Meerut Utta Pradesh 250002
(LC No. HLSA000385C0 of Bareilly Branch) ANKUR GUPTA (Borrower) CHANDRA	Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 585120 /-(₹ Five lakh Eighty Five Thousand One Hundred Twenty Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt:24-03-2025 /₹ 783319.59 /-(₹ Seven lakh Eighty Three Thousand Three Hundred	Plot 26 Part Of Khasra no 115, Gram Mahommadpur Marza Pargana Mohana Luckr Uttar Pradesh 226016 Plot 26 Part Of Khasra no 115, Gram Mahommadpur Marza Pargana Mohana Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226016 Part Of Khasra Ho 09 ki juj, Village Sahava Mohalla Sarvoday Nagar Bareilly Uttar
MUKHI (Co Borrower 1)  (LC No. HLSA000385C0TU of Bareilly Branch) ANKUR GUPTA (Borrower) CHANDRA MUKHI (Co Borrower 1)	Nineteen Only and Fifty Nine Paise) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 / \$658394 /-(\$ Six lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Four Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Pradesh 243001  Part Of Khasra Ho 09 ki juj, Village Sahava Mohalla Sarvoday Nagar Bareilly Uttar Pradesh 243001
(IC No. HLSA0004E6A2 of Moradabad Branch) MOHD FAISAL (Borrower) SHAJIYA FAISAL (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. HLSA00061770 of Noida Branch) ARVIND KUMAR (Borrower) Babli Devi (Co	Only MPA (03-0223)  Dt: 24-03-2025 /* 2167549 /-(* Twenty One lakh Sixty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Forty Nine Only) NPA (05-03-2025)  Dt: 24-03-2025 /* 2817061 /-(* Twenty Eight lakh Seventeen Thousand Sixty One	Private plot no 4 & 5, Over that part of khasra 63, Gram Mustafabad Aehatmalli, Plot over ti gala no 63, Moradabad Uttar Pradesh 244001 Khasra No.103 Min, Chipiyana Khurd URF Tig Pargana And Tehsil Dadri, Shri Ram Properties
Borrower 1) (LC No. HLSA0008232D of Meerut Branch) SHAHID (Borrower) Farhat (Co Borrower 1)	Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 2464007 /-(₹ Twenty Four lakh Sixty Four Thousand Seven Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Ghaziabad-201318, Uttar Pradesh Khasra No.60 & 61, Plot No.83, Village- Lisadi, Pargana Tehsil & Distt. Meerut, Meerut-25000 Uttar Pradesh
(LC No.HLSA00088C8F of Prayagraj Branch) CHANDRA BHUSHAN (Borrower) Surya Bhushan (Co Borrower 1)  (LC No. HLSA000AD746 of Lucknow -	Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 533557 /-(₹ Five lakh Thirty Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Seven Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 2723969 /-(₹ Twenty	Part of Arazi No.1177, Mauza Korsand, Pargan Mizzapur Chauhari Tehsil Soraon, District - Prayagraj, Rail Crossing 40 No Gomati, Allahat - 212502, Uttar Pradesh House No.2, Constructed on plot, Part Of Kha
Gomti Nagar Branch) SANDEEP KUMAR DVIVEDI (Borrower) Roli Dwivedi (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0045407 of Noida Branch) ANIL KUMAR (Borrower) Yograj Singh (Co	Seven lakh Twenty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Nine Only) NPA (05-03-2025)  Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 1231953 /-(₹ Twelve lakh Thirty One Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty	No.131/1, Situated At Village Tiwaripur, Prima School Tiwaripur, Pargana & Tehsii- B.K.T., Dist Lucknow, Lucknow-226021, Uttar Pradesh Khata No.577, Khasra No.1147, Shanti Farm House, Gautam Buddha Nagar-203207, Uttar
Borrower 1) Janesh Janesh(Co Borrower 2) (LC No. M0056193 of Lucknow - Gomti Nagar Branch) ABHISHEK GUPTA (Borrower) Anuradha Singh	Three Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 3353894 /-(₹ Thirty Three lakh Fifty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Four Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Pradesh  House Built over plot no.10 part of Khasra No 118,119,127, Situated at Village- Bhaptamau, India Hospital, Ward - Haiderganj Pargana, Tehseel Dist Lucknow-226017, Uttar Pradesh
(Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0073016 of Bareilly Branch) VAHID ALI (Borrower) Nilofar (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0081610 of Aligarh Branch)	Dt: 24-03-2025 /₹ 1211074.84 /-(₹ Twelve lakh Eleven Thousand Seventy Four Only and Eighty Four Paise) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt: 24-03-2025 /₹ 2442602 /-(₹ Twenty	Part Of Khet No.110, Village Sanua, C B Ganj, Tehsil & District- Bareilly, Bareilly-243002, Utt Pradesh Mauja Dhorra Mafi, Pargana & Tehsil Koil, Ploi
SAMEER SAMEER (Borrower) Rashidan (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0093895 of Lucknow - Gomti	Four lakh Forty Two Thousand Six Hundred Two Only) NPA (05-03-2025) Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 2053545 /-(₹ Twenty	Khasra No. 57A Mi, Mauja Dhorra Mafi, Near N. B. Hospital Waqar Hospital, Agra-282002, Uttar Pradesh Arazi No.919/1, Gram - Jogipur, Nagar Pancha
Nagar Branch) MAHENDRA SINGH (Borrower) Indubala Singh (Co Borrower 1) (LC No. M0147731 of Kanpur Branch) RAM DHEERAJ (Borrower) Renu Devi (Co Borrower 1)	lakh Fifty Three Thousand Five Hundred Forty Five Only) NPA (05-03-2025)  Dt :24-03-2025 /₹ 1658510 /-(₹ Sixteen lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Ten Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Mauza - Kachchava Front of Khappad Baba Mandir, Pargana Kaslwar, Tehsil Sadar, Dist Mirzapur, Mirzapur-231501, Uttar Pradesh Part Of House No.20/B/43, Built on Arazi No.8 (Min), Near BOI Bank, Gayatri Nagar, Mauza Majhra Piperkhera Ehatmail, Pargana- Hadaha
(LC No. M0253948 of Prayagraj Branch) RASHIDA PARVEEN (Borrower)	Dt :24-03-2025 /국 2692556 /-(국 Twenty Six lakh Ninety Two Thousand Five Hundred	Tehsil & Distt- Unnao, Unnao-209861, Uttar Pradesh H. No.34 T/5A/4, Mohalla Pura Madari, Arazi No.345/3, Near Sahara Public Girls Inter Colleg
Mohammad Tarooq (Co Borrower 1) (Lo, BLSA0001C014 of Meerut Branch) (Legal Heirs of Iklash Malik (Borrower), Shabanam (Co Borrower 1) Monish Malik (Co Borrower 2)	Fifty Six Only) NPA (05-03-2025)	Kareli, Allahabad-211016, Uttar Pradesh House Bearing Municial No. 3123B, Part of On Residential Plot Bearing No. 19B, Part of Land
(LC No. M0085504 of Meerut Branch) All Legal Heirs of Vinod Kumar (Borrower) , Guddi Devi	Dt:29-01-2025 /₹ 373370.44 /-{₹ Three lakh Seventy Three Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Rupees and Forty Four Paise) NPA (04-11-2023)	House No. 903/90, Khasra No. 1339, Sadhu Nagar, Kanker, Nanglatashi, Kasampur, Meerul U.P. – 250001 admeasuring 110.66 sq. yard Bounded as under: East: Road 15 feet wide West: Badhu Plot No. 14 North: Plot Number 10 South: Road 20 Feet
(LC No. BLSA0001C69F of Hathras Branch) Legal Heirs of Yash Gupta (Borrower) Meera Gupta (Co Borrower 1) Sunil Kumar Gupta (Co Borrower 2)	Dt:03-02-2025 /₹ 1470506 /- (₹ Fourteen lakh Seventy Thousand Five Hundred Six Rupees) NPA (08-03-2022)	Plot Bhagwat Colony, Atal Pal, Part of Khasra N 200 Bhagwat Colony, Village Hathras Dehat Bhagwant Colony, - 204101 admeasuring 793 Sq.ft. Bound As Under: East: Plot Laxmi Narayan West: Path 12 feet wide North: Plot Chiranji Lal
(LC No. M0196765 of Delhi Branch) Leela Kumari (Borrower) Akash Kandel (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 05-02-2025 / \$ 552997 /-{\$ Five lakh Fifty Two Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Seven Rupees) NPA (04-04-2024)	Flat No. C-1, 2nd Floor without roof rights, 5M Apartment-2, Khasra No. 1036-1037-1038, He Colony, Village Barola, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, UP – 201301 admeasuring 93.22 Sq. m North-East: Plot of Other North-East: Plot of Other North-East: Rasta 12ft. South-West: Rasta 12ft.
(LC No. M0169890 of Delhi - Dwarka Branch) All Legal Heirs of Mohd. Mukim (Borrower) Anisa Mukim (Co Borrower 1)	Dt::05-02-2025 /₹ 1256391.63 /-(₹ Twelve lakh Fifty Six Thousand Three Hundred Ninety One Rupees and Sixty Three Paise) NPA (04-04-2024)	South-West: Rasta 12ft. Ward No. 5/3, Prem Nagar, Khasra No. 21/1, Li Ghaziabad, UP – 201102 admeasuring 50 m se yds. Bound As Under: East: Plot of Others West: Road 10 ft. North: Plot of Others South: Plot of Others
(LC No.M0115820 of Meerut Branch) Legal Heirs of Lalit Sharma (Borrower) Meera Gupta (Co Borrower 1) Sunil Kumar Gupta (Co Borrower 2)	Dt :03-02-2025 /₹ 553558 /-{₹Five lakh Fifty Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Eight Rupees) NPA (05-05-2024)	House No. C-54, Khasra No. 163/2, Rajpura, Meerut, UP – 250001 admeasuring 89.83 Sq. y Bound As Under: East: 18 feet 4-1/2 inches, p 22 feet wide West: Plot No. C-47 North: Plot N C - 55 South: Plot No. C - 53
(LC No. 25600000849 of Noida - Sector 2 Branch) Legal Heirs of Raghu Prasad Rath	Dt :29-01-2025 /₹ 4600155 /-(₹ Forty Six lakh One Hundred Fifty Five Rupees) NPA (10-12-2023)	Khata No. 139, Rev Plot No. 73 (Old Khata No. 190/955, Plot No. 73/961) Sub Plot No. 111, Mouza – Pokhariput, BBSR, Dist. Khurdha, Odh

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.

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limite Date: 23-04-2025 Place: Uttar Pradesh

# Sakshi Maharaj voices concern over situation in West Bengal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Kanpur

haratiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Bunao, Sakshi Maharaj, has once again heated up the political atmosphere with his sharp statements. From West Bengal to Uttar Pradesh, he launched a scathing attack on the opposition and

strongly defended the policies of the BJP. In a press conference held at Sakshi Dham in Gadan Kheda, Unnao Lok Sabha constituency on Tuesday, Sakshi Maharaj expressed deep concern over the situation in West Bengal. When asked about imposition of President's rule in West Bengal, Sakshi Maharaj said, "Looking at the situation in Murshidabad and across West Bengal, the Government of India is concerned. The matter is now in the Supreme Court and whatever decision the court



BJP MP from Unnao Shakshi Maharaj addressing mediapersons on Tuesday.

He claimed that even the Mamata government's own investigation reveals that injustice was done to Hindus and they were driven out. He insisted that it is time for the Supreme Court and the central government to take a firm decision.

Supporting Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti's statement urging Hindus to have three children, Sakshi Maharaj said, "I had already said in Meerut that population balance should not be disturbed. Either the government should bring a law — 'Hum Do, Hamare Do' ('Two of us, two of ours') or even 'Hum Do, Hamara Ek' ('we two, our one child'). If no such law is made, then Hindus should have not three, but four children?

The Unnao MP also took a jibe at Akhilesh Yadav's statements, saying,

'Those whose sins don't get washed away with a holy dip, they don't even bathe."

On Akhilesh Yadav's claim that there is

a threat to his life, Sakshi Maharaj advised him to approach the Supreme Court, stating that he already has full security. Responding to Akhilesh's claim of forming the government in 2027, Sakshi Maharaj sarcastically quoted a famous poet, saying, "Delusions are good to entertain the heart, Ghalib."

Regarding the Samajwadi Party-Congress alliance, he said that no matter what the coalition, Bharatiya Janata Party's victory chariot will not be stopped.

Sakshi Maharaj asserted that not only in 2024 but in 2027 too, the Bharatiya Janata Party will return to power. He said that the actions of the opposition would be enough to ensure their defeat in 2027.

### **Human chain formed**



A human chain being formed on World Earth Day in Varanasi on Tuesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Varanasi

human chain was formed with the Agoal of greenery all around the earth, clean air, clean Ganga and water conservation on the occasion of World Earth Day here on Tuesday. Besides, a cleanliness drive was organised at Gaighat under the joint aegis of 137 CETF 39 Gorkha Regiment Ganga Task Force, Bihar Regiment, Namami Gange Ganga Vichar Manch (City unit), 97 Battalion NCC, Bengali Tola Vidyalaya, Akhand Hind Fauj and Varanasi Municipal Corporation (VMC).

All the people present on the banks of the Ganga pledged to make the river clean. During the 'shramdaan' (voluntary work) on the banks of Ganga, the garbage was collected by sweeping and sent for disposal. The banks of the river reverberated with the proclamation of 'Har Har Gange',

'Namami Gange', 'We will not stop, we will clean it' etc.

Ganga Task Force officer Ajay Kumar Ojha said a special contingent of army personnel was continuously promoting cleanliness campaign and plantation with the help of common people for 'Ganga Nirmalkaran' (purification). District coordinator of Namami Gange Ganga Vichar Manch Shivam Agrahari said the greenery of our fields was due to Maa Ganga and a large population is dependent on this river for drinking water. "We have to remain continuously engaged for the cleanliness of Maa Ganga, the lifeline of India", he said. A large number of people, including Subedar Devendra Basnet, Dhanesh Kumar, Jai Vishwakarma, Shivangi Pandey, Renu Jaiswal, Deepshikha Kannaujiya, Ajay Kannaujiya, Kiran Pandey, Praveen Yadav and VMC employees were present.

### Workshop on 'Waqf Sudhar Janjagran Abhiyan' today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Varanasi

**¬**he Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Kashi region workshop on Waqf Sudhar Janjagran Abhiyan will be held on April 23 at 11 am at a resort in Babatpur area. National BJP general secretary and Rajya Sabha Member Dr Radha Mohan Das Agarwal will address this workshop as the chief guest. Giving this information, regional party president against this bill, but BJP will take the truth Dilip Patel, while addressing the meeting to the people with the resolve of Prime

of the regional workshop management team at the party's regional office in Rohania here on Monday said the Waqf Amendment Act-2025 will not only protect the rights of individual properties and inheritance, but will also promote transparency and accountability in the society. Targeting the opposition, he said that some political parties are trying to confuse people by doing negative propaganda

Minister Narendra Modi's 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas'. He said that in this regional workshop, regional office-bearers, district in charges of all 16 districts, district presidents, campaign coordinators, co-coordinators, Lok Sabha and Rajva Sabha MPs, Lok Sabha candidates, MLCs, MLAs, assembly candidates, district presidents of Minority Front, regional officebearers, presidents and general secretaries of Minority, Scheduled Caste, Mahila and Yuva fronts apart from coordinators, cocoordinators of IT, Social Media, Media cells are expected to take part. The meeting was conducted by the regional general secretary Ashok Chaurasia and attended by Rajesh Rajbhar, Anil Srivastava, Fahad Jamal Lari, Nand Ji Pandey, Jai Singh Pal, Namrata Chaurasia, Sandeep Keshari, Dr Ashok Rai, Navratan Rathi, Arvind Pandey, Vijay Gupta, Santosh Solapurkar, JP Singh, Piyush Vardhan, Pradeep Jaiswal, Rajkumar Jaiswal, JP Singh, Amit Patel Rinku, Ganpati Yadav and others.

### 2 of family killed in mishap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Prayagraj

man and his daughter were killed when a speeding pickup truck ran over a family sleeping in a roadside garden near Brij Mangal Singh Inter College in Rampur under Industrial police station area on Tuesday. On getting information police reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem examination. The police are searching for the driver along with the pickup truck.

According to police, Birju (25) originally from Raebareli, started living in Jaggi Pur village in Bara police station area. He lived in a hut in a garden near Brij Mangal Singh Inter College in Rampur. Around 4 am on Tuesday everyone was sleeping on the ground in the same garden after having dinner. In the meantime, the pickup truck passed through the garden ramming over the family sleeping in the dark. In this accident, Birju and his sixyear-old daughter Deepasna died on the spot while wife Sapna and two others were injured in this mishap.

After the incident, an attempt was made in charge Kushal Tiwari sent the bodies for post-mortem examination. The Kushal Tiwari said that the accident occurred when everyone was sleeping.

The CCTV cameras installed on the nearby road are being checked to find out who owns the pickup and who was the driver. The police is searching for the accused driver.

#### MAN MURDERED

A 38-year-old man was allegedly killed by his friend in Karchana police station area of Prayagraj. The deceased was identified as Manoj Singh of Deori Kala village. Pradeep Mishra alias Kallu of Anthiya village, took Manoj with him for soil digging work. Reports said that both of them used to work together on JCB machine for a long time. In the evening Manoj spoke to his children on the phone.

When Manoj did not return home at night, the family members became anxious and contacted him on his mobile phone which was found switched off. On contacting Pradeep, he said that Manoj would come in some time. Late in the night Pradeep allegedly brought Manoj's body and absconded after placing it on a plank outside the house.

Insan Singh, brother of the deceased, getting the information, police station He alleged that Pradeep made Manoj drink alcohol and killed him with a sharp weapon. ACP Karchana Sanjay Singh said search for the driver and the pickup is the police have sent the body for poston. Industrial police station in charge mortem examination. Accused Pradeep has been taken into custody. Police is investigating the matter.

### **Plantation** drive held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Kanpur

n the occasion of Earth Day, residents of Ram Krishna Apartment located in McRobartganj participated in a plantation drive on Tuesday. On this occasion, senior homeopathic physician Dr Hemant Mohan emphasised the importance of green plants in maintaining environmental balance.

A senior teacher, Dr Rama Sharma, said green plants should be nurtured like family members. They need to be watered on time, provided proper nutrients and the dried leaves should be removed regularly.

The residents took a pledge to regularly plant trees and care for them. They also planted saplings within the premises. Dr. Hemant Mohan explained that green plants contain a substance called chlorophyll, which is essential for photosynthesis. The residents pledged to plant a sapling on special occasions like their wedding anniversaries and their birthdays of children. Among those were Gopal Varshney, Pramod Bansal, Vijay Agarwal, Shailesh Doshi, Jitendra Gupta, Santosh Agarwal, Rajan Bhargava, Sunil Agarwal, Pankaj Doshi, Manish Agarwal, Pankaj Agarwal, Anil Mishra, Saurabh Nigam, Shatrughna Suneja, Sarla Lath, Sunita Varshney and others.

### Importance of Earth Day highlighted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Kanpur

ice-Chancellor of Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology (CSAUA&T), Prof Anand Kumar Singh, said that April 22 was celebrated worldwide as World Earth Day to promote awareness about the importance of our planet and the need to protect and improve the environment.

In his message emphasising the importance of this global observance, Dr Singh highlighted that the main objective of observing this day was to make the general public aware of the value of beauty with lush green forests,

Earth, to protect the environment and to strive towards making it better. He said on this day, millions of people across the globe come together to discuss pressing environmental issues such as pollution, deforestation and ecological degradation. The V-C said the theme for World Earth Day 2025 is "Our Planet, Our Earth." This theme sets the goal of tripling global renewable energy production by the year 2030, with a special focus on clean energy sources such as geothermal, hydroelectric, tidal, wind and solar energy. He added that

mountains and vast deserts. Preserving these natural wonders is now more essential than ever.

The V-C said, "the vision of a golden future can only be realised if we take proper care of our planet. It is the responsibility of every living being on Earth to keep the environment clean and safe, ensuring that future generations can enjoy a better quality of life. Even small, positive initiatives by individuals can lead to significant changes, contributing greatly to the protection and preservation

### Innovative sensing device developed This sensing device developed at the IIT

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Varanasi

team of researchers at the School of A Biochemical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi, has developed an innovative 3D trimetallic nanodendrite-based electrochemical sensing device for the highly senamount of drug in pharmaceutical formulations and milk samples. The inappropriate and uncontrolled use of antibiotics to treat infectious diseases in humans and livestock causes an excessive amount of leftover antibiotics to be released into the environment, contaminating food and natural water supplies. Further, overuse of these drugs leads to the emergence of antibiotic resistance, which remains one of the most pressing and widespread challenges in the medical domain today. Hence, there is a pressing need for a more practical, rapid, and user-friendly platform for drug analysis. One such promising alternative is the deployment of electrochemical techniques, which have been increasingly utilised for the detection of diverse molecules across clinical, biomedical, and environmental domains.

The primary motivation of researchers behind this study was to overcome the limitations of existing methods by simplifying the preparation procedure, reducing detection time, and achieving a lower detection limit for more efficient and practical sensing applications. Prof

Pranjal Chandra the lead inventor of the technology, said that the newly designed sensor has excellent stability, commendably fast response time, and requires only a single-step modification process, which sets it apart from most previously reported approaches.

Such sensors are very effective and can in various food items that will be beneficial for common persons at large, said Rohini Kumari and Daphika S Dkhar, research scholars and coinventors of the developed technology. The developed technology was validated in a diverse range of real sample matrices including testing the drugs in milk samples and drug formulations. Such devices are very powerful in validating the overdoses of drugs or its adulterations in different food samples. Overall, the patented technology of IIT (BHU) shows excellent selectivity.

At present, the team is attempting to convert the device into a multiplexer module simultaneous pharmacological analysis, which will be extremely beneficial in affordable healthcare, food, and pharmaceutical industries. The team's main focus is to directly address the root causes of antibiotic resistance, food safety concerns, and environmental health risks, fostering a more sustainable approach to antibiotic management.

(BHU) has been presented at leading national and international conferences and has earned several accolades. The IIT (BHU) holds the patent for this technology with Prof Pranjal Chandra, Rohini Kumari and Daphika S Dkhar as inventors. A patent has been granted on dendrites and its potential clinical impact in the domain of drug quantification. "Our patented platform holds broad applicability and will be beneficial to experts in a variety of domains and to the common man at large", said Prof Chandra. IIT (BHU) Director Prof Amit Patra congratulated the entire team for securing a patent for their innovative work, which falls under the flagship programme of Government of India which includes; Make in India, Self-reliant India, Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance & Research Initiative by ICMR, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare National Action Plan on AMR. Prof Patra added that this costeffective sensing platform, developed using nanoengineering in the laboratory of Prof Pranjal Chandra at IIT (BHU), is timely and crucial, as antimicrobial resistance poses an increasing threat to global public health. "We are committed to develop cutting-edge technologies for diverse applications that should also reach the common man even in remote area", added Prof Patra.

#### Benefits of nano fertilisers emphasised इफको नैनो यरिया एवं नैनो डी.ए.पी

→he IFFCO Phulpur unit team on Tuesday visited Chandopara village, Handia, and conducted Kisan Chaupal sessions to introduce farmers to Nano Urea Plus and Nano DAP for paddy crops. The team discussed the benefits, method of spraying and quantity of these nano fertilisers. Senior Executive Director (Unit Head)

Sanjay Kudesia emphasised the benefits of nano fertilisers in increasing crop yields and encouraged farmers to try

He suggested that farmers use Nano Urea Plus and Nano DAP on a portion of their land to experience the difference. Sanjay Kudesia announced that IFFCO would provide free dronebased nano spraying services for paddy crops. Farmers showed enthusiasm towards Nano Urea Plus and Nano DAP during the chaupal sessions. The IFFCO Tiwari (Manager Training), Pankaj team, including CORDET Principal Dr Pandey (President, IFFCO Employees'



Harish Chandra, PRO Swayam Prakash and others were present to address the queries of the farmers.

The event was also attended by key IFFCO officials, including Anurag

Sangh), Vijay Kumar Yadav (general secretary), Rajesh Singh, Abhishek Patel, Ajay Mishra and Agay Dubey. PRO Swayam Prakash said the initiative aims to promote the use of nano fertilisers and support farmers in improving crop yield.

organising the event. Principal Aghvesh

Katiyar, in his address, stressed the

importance of monitoring children's

behaviour. A formal pledge was taken for the safety of daughters. Among those

present at the event were teachers and

staff, including Ram Chandra Mishra,

Dilip Kumar Mishra, Jayant Kumar,

Virendra Singh Yadav, P.P. Upadhyay, Suchita and Arpana Trivedi.

TRAINING SESSION

### Jalota, Sajan Mishra regale music lovers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Varanasi

s soon as 'Bhajan Samrat' Pt Anup Jalota came on stage with his fellow artistes, on the sixth and last day of the internationally famous Sankat Mochan Sangeet Samarih at Sankat Mochan Temple premises here on Monday night the audience welcomed him with a loud applause.

The day's presentation began with Odissi dance by eminent artistes Ratikant Mohapatra and Sujata Mohapatra and disciples of Srijan Sanstha. Pt Ratikant Mohapatra started the dance with the Sabri dance drama and decorated the dance with many beautiful presentations of this mythological story. In the dance, the hand and foot movements and expressions were commendable.

A huge crowd of music lovers was present to listen to the seventh presentation by Padam Bhushan vocalist Pt Sajan Mishra along with Swaransh Mishra. After singing two compositions in Rag Basant Mukhari, they ended the singing

senior singer Pt Ulhas Kasalkar mesmerised the audience. He started the singing with two compositions in tritaal in Raga Kedar and then ended the first



Eminent Bhajan singer Anup Jalota performing at Sankat Mochan Temple premises in Varanasi on

chapter with a tarana. After this, he ended the singing with a composition in Malkauns Bahar. Pt Suresh Talwarkar and Pt Vinay Mishra participated with him on samvadhini. In the next performance, Mehtab Ali Niazi from Mumbai present-

ed sitar playing. After Anup Jalota, Pt Suresh Gandharwa from Delhi presented a song. After singing two compositions in Rag Abhogi in Ektaal and Teentaal, he ended the song with Thumri. He was accompanied by Pankaj Rai on tabla and Mohit Sahni on samvadini. Then the next presentation was of

flute playing. The artistes were famous Pt Ronu Majumdar and Rishikesh Majumdar. They performed Rag Parmeshwari on flute. They first played Dhamar and then ended the play by playing compositions in Teentaal. The entire presentation was very impressive.

In the end, Mahant Prof Vishwambhar Nath Mishra blessed the artistes. Actor Shahbaz took blessings from Mahant. Shahbaz Khan, son of famous cine actor and great singer Ustad Amir Khan Sahab, who had come from Mumbai to participate in the conference, was honoured by

### Emphasis on monitoring children's behaviour



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Kanpur

n awareness programme was organised at GNK Inter College, Civil Lines, on Tuesday under the aegis of Shakuntala Devi Raj Shiksha Seva

Daughter) campaign. The event aimed to sensitise students about the importance of

protecting and respecting girls. National President Dr Diwakar Prajapati, also spoke on the occasion. Sandhya Chakravarty, a team member of the Beti Sansthan, as part of the Beti Bachao, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign, Padhao (Save the Daughter, Educate the expressed her gratitude to the school for

A new training session commenced from Tuesday at The Sports Hub (TSH), located in Arya Nagar. Supported by the Smart City Mission, Kanpur Municipal Corporation, Khelo India, and Fit India Movement, this initiative aims to provide world-class sports training free of cost to talented children from the Economically Weaker Section (EWS).

with *bhajans*. Earlier, in the second performance,

# PM Modi's aircraft escorted by F-15 jets of Saudi Arabia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ignifying close ties between the two countries, in a special gesture, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aircraft was escorted by F-15 jets of Saudi Arabia when his special flight entered the airspace of the Gulf nation on Tuesday, officials said. Modi is paying a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also released a video of the Saudi jets escorting Modi's aircraft. The gesture is being seen as deepening of Defence cooperation between the two countries.

The Prime Minister on Tuesday said India deeply values its long and historic ties with Saudi Arabia, asserting that their relations have acquired a strategic depth and momentum in recent years.

In his departure statement ahead of his two-day visit to the kingdom on the invitation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, he said both countries have developed a mutually beneficial and substantive partnership, including in the domains of defence, trade, investment, energy and people-to-people ties.

'We have shared interest and commitment to promote regional peace, prosperity, security and stability," Modi said, noting that it will be his third visit to the country and the first one to the historic city of Jeddah.

He said he looked forward to participating in the second meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council and building upon the highly successful state visit of Mohammed bin Salman to India in 2023. Modi described the crown prince as "my brother".

He said he is also eager to connect with the "vibrant" Indian community in Saudi Arabia that continues to serve as the living bridge between the two nations and



Prime Minister Narendra Modi looks at the fighter jets of Royal Saudi Air Force escorting his aircraft as

strengthening the cultural and human ties. Officials noted that all prime ministers before Modi together visited Saudi Arabia three times in close to seven decades. This is also Modi's 15th visit to a country in the Gulf region, they added.

In an interview with Arab News, ahead of his visit Modi said India and Saudi Arabia have a natural interest in safeguarding peace and stability in the region and the growing defence and security collaboration between the two countries is a reflection of deep mutual trust.

Modi described Saudi Arabia as "one of India's most valued partners, a maritime neighbour, a trusted friend and a strategic ally".

"We consider Saudi Arabia as a force of makes an immense contribution to positivity and stability in the region. As

maritime neighbours, India and Saudi Arabia share a natural interest in safeguarding peace and stability in the region,"

"The growing defence and security engagement and collaboration between the two countries is a reflection of deep mutual trust," he said.

"It is also a testament to our shared commitment to regional stability, and our mutual resolve to address the evolving challenges in our extended neighbourhood," Modi added.

In their talks on Tuesday evening, Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman are expected to focus on boosting defence ties apart from enhancing engagement in many other

### **Haryana CM to** dedicate 18 road projects in Gurugram

PARVESH SHARMA Gurugram

aryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini will dedicate 18 road development projects worth over ₹115 crore related to the Public Works Department (PWD) in Sohna and Pataudi Assembly constituencies in Gurugram on Wednesday, officials said. The CM will also inaugurate the first modern street of Haryana at Udyog Vihar during his visit.

Executive Engineer of PWD Charandeep Singh Rana said that Chief Minister Saini will inaugurate the Loh Singhani to Chamanpura Road, Nunera from BPDS Road, and Alipur Hari Heda from Loh Singhani to Chamanpura Road, built in the Sohna assembly constituency.

At the same time, the foundation stone of the renovation work of the Sohna-Abhayapur-Lohtki-Khedla and Damdama to Rithoj road from Sohna-Abhayapur-Lohtki-Khedla and Damdama to Rithoj road from Dhumaspur via Nayagaon will be laid.

Charandeep Singh Rana said that in this sequence, the Chief Minister will also give various road development projects in Pataudi Assembly on Wednesday.

He informed us that the Chief Minister will also lay the foundation stone for the renovation of the Kheda Khurmpur road in the Pataudi Assembly. The estimated cost of these different projects would be around over 115 cores.

Deputy Commissioner Gurugram, Ajay Kumar, informed that the Chief Minister will also preside over the 14th meeting of the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) in Gurugram on Wednesday.

### **Pegasus row: Supreme Court** sets April 29 to hear pleas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

⊣he Supreme Court on Tuesday fixed next week to hear a batch of pleas seeking a probe into the alleged unauthorised use of Pegasus spyware for the surveillance of journalists among others. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh posted the hearing on April 29 for want of time. Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for some petitioners, said the top court previously directed for supply of reports of a technical panel but no such report was shared.

This court will have to pass some directions because we have not received the reports. Kindly hear it urgently," Divan said. The bench directed for listing the matter next week.

On March 7, the top court fixed April

22 for hearing the pleas. On August 25, 2022, the top court said the technical panel appointed by it to probe the unauthorised use of Pegasus found some malware in five of 29 examined cell phones but it could not be held

that the Israeli spyware was used.
After perusing the report submitted by former apex court Justice RV Raveendran, the top court said the Central government did not cooperate with the Pegasus probe.

The top court in 2021 ordered a probe into the allegations of the use of Israeli spyware by government agencies for targeted surveillance of politicians, journalists, and activists and appointed technical and supervisory committees to

The overseeing panel submitted a "lengthy" three-part report, one of which suggested amending the law to protect citizens' right to privacy and ensure the nation's cyber security.

The technical panel, which included three experts on cyber security, digital forensics, networks, and hardware, was

asked by the top court to "inquire, investigate and determine" whether Pegasus spyware was used for snooping on citizens and their probe would be monitored by Raveendran.

The panel members were Naveen Kumar Chaudhary, Prabaharan P, and Ashwin Anil Gumaste.

Justice Raveendran, who headed the panel, was assisted by former IPS officer Alok Joshi and cyber security expert Sundeep Oberoi in monitoring the inquiry of the technical panel. The apex



court order said the probe panel would be empowered to enquire and investigate the steps or actions taken by the Centre after reports in 2019 claimed the hacking of WhatsApp accounts of Indian citizens using the Pegasus suite of spyware.

It also directed the panel to ascertain if any Pegasus suite was acquired by the union of India, or any state government, or any central or state agency for use against the citizens of India.

An international media consortium reported over 300 verified Indian cell phone numbers were on the list of potential targets for surveillance using the

### Row over Bills: SC to examine if Tamil Nadu verdict covers issues raised by Kerala

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

→he Supreme Court on Tuesday said it would examine whether the recent judgement on a plea of Tamil Nadu, fixing timelines for the grant of assent to bills, covered the issues raised by the Kerala government in its pleas. A bench comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi agreed to hear on May 6 the pleas of the Kerala government against Governor over the delay in approving bills passed by the state assembly.

"We will look into that judgement and see whether issues raised here are covered," the bench said when Attorney General R Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre judgement delivered by a bench headed by Justice JB Pardiwala did not cover the issues raised by the Kerala government.

A bench comprising Justices Pardiwala and R Mahadevan on April 8 delivered a significant verdict on the plea of Tamil Nadu and set aside the reservation of the 10 bills for President's consideration in the second round holding it as illegal, erro-

The bench, for the first time, also prescribed that President should decide on the bills reserved for her consideration by

from the date on which such reference is received. Kerala seeks similar directions in its case. On Tuesday, senior advocate KK Venugopal, appearing for Kerala, said the pleas of the state were covered by the recent udgement. "What is the timeline for making a reference to the President by the Governor and this issue is dealt with by that judgement and there are no other questions," he said. He urged the bench to allow the pleas of the Kerala government in terms of the Tamil Nadu judgement.

Mehta, however, insisted on making submissions saying the case of Kerala was not covered by the Tamil Nadu judgement. "The (Tamil Nadu) judgment does not

cover certain issues in this case on facts said and fixed the pleas for hearing on May 6. The bench asked Venugopal to mention the third and subsequent plea of the state government, challenging the withholding of assent by President, before the CJI so that it can also be referred to it.

Venugopal said the Chief Justice of India directed listing of the petition on May 13.

The bench said a mention had to be made before the CJI for tagging the other petition with the present one.

In 2023, the top court expressed displeasure over the then Kerala Governor Arif

Governor within a period of three months Mohammed Khan "sitting" for two years on bills passed by the state legislature.

Khan is currently Governor of Bihar. The top court, on July 26, last year, agreed to consider the plea of oppositionruled Kerala alleging the denial of assent to bills passed by the legislative assembly.

The Kerala government alleged that Khan referred certain bills to President Droupadi Murmu and those were yet to be cleared. Taking note of the pleas, the top court issued notices to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and the secretaries of the Kerala Governor. Venugopal said, "This is the most unfortunate situation."

The state said its plea related to the acts of Governor in reserving seven bills, which he was required to deal with himhad anything to do with Centre-state rela-

The bills were pending with Governor for as long as two years and his action "subverted" the functioning of the state legislature, rendering its very existence "ineffective and otiose", the state added.

The bills include public interest bills that are for the public good, and even these have been rendered ineffective by the Governor not dealing with each one of them 'as soon as possible', as required by the proviso to Article 200," the plea said.

### Neither Parliament nor executive but Constitution is supreme: Opposition wrong? So what is the vice-president talk-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

either Parliament nor the executive but the Constitution is supreme, opposition leaders said on Tuesday as they hit back at Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar who slammed his critics for questioning his remarks on a recent Supreme Court order and proclaimed the supremacy of Parliament. The opposition leaders' assertions came after Dhankhar said every word spoken by a constitutional authority was guided by supreme national interest.

In a social media post, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal said, "Supreme Court: Parliament has the plenary power to pass laws. Supreme Court has the obligation plete justice (Article 142)."

"Everything the court said is: Consistent with our constitutional values; guided by national interest," the Independent Rajya Sabha MP and former Congress leader said. In another post, Sibal said, "The law: Neither Parliament nor the Executive is supreme, the Constitution is supreme. The provisions of the Constitution are interpreted by the Supreme Court. That's how this country has understood the law so far!" AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi also reacted

sharply to Dhankhar's remarks, saying the iudiciary would intervene if a wrong law was made and constitutional articles were misused. "It is his limited understanding.

Parliament is definitely supreme and

independent. The judiciary and executive

are also independent. This is why the

stereo separation of powers is part of (the)

basic structure of our constitution... If you make wrong laws, if you misuse the constitutional articles, then judiciary will intervene," Owaisi told reporters. RJD leader and Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha said, "The vice-president is a respected constitutional authority but I would urge him to revisit the Constituent Assembly debates where the importance

legislature was discussed... The Constitution remains our ultimate guide." Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate said there was a strict division of powers in the Constitution among the

legislature, executive and the judiciary. The judiciary in this country is meant to do judicial review. Yes, Parliament makes the law but the Supreme Court of India is the supreme authority to review those laws to find if those laws meet the norms of the Constitution. Should the

judiciary be shut down? Is judicial review

ing about? The vice-president should talk about how governors across the country have become puppets of the BJP," she said.

Reacting to Dhankhar's remarks, Congress leader and former Lok Sabha MP Danish Ali said the Constitution belonged to the people and not any "elected king" sitting in power. "Public representatives are servants of the people, not their masters. Now that the judiciary is looking them in the eye and showing them the truth, these 'masters' have started feeling the Constitution to be a burden. The country knows who is the 'master' who appoints these people 'who follow orders," Ali said in a social media post in Hindi.

"For Vice-President Dhankhar ji, a partance but for us the Constitution is supreme. The country will not forgive the campaign being run to make a particular person all-powerful by ignoring democratic norms under the garb of Parliament or the executive," he said.

The vice-president is occupying a very high constitutional post and will be aware but is not saying that the Supreme Court has the power to review the laws passed by Parliament, Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav said.

"How can you snatch that right?"

### Mallikarjun Kharge condemns Pahalgam terror attack



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ongress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday condemned the terror attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam, saying it is a blot on humanity. He also said the country's national security is paramount and urged the central government to take corrective measures. "I strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir. The entire nation is united in fighting the

scourge of cross-border terrorism. "These dastardly targeted attacks are a blot on humanity. News reports indicate that precious lives have been lost. On behalf of the Congress party, my heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. Our thoughts and prayers are with the injured," the Congress president said in a social media post.

"India's National Security is paramount and we urge the GOI to take corrective measures to ensure the same," Kharge said. Congress general secretary Priyanka

as a highly condemnable and shameful act, and said the country stands united against terrorism. "Targeting unarmed and innocent civilians is a crime against humanity. This is completely unacceptable. The whole country stands united against terrorism and strongly condemns it," she said in a social media post in Hindi. "According to reports, many tourists have

Gandhi Vadra also denounced the attack

been killed in this attack. May God grant peace to the departed souls. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," she said. Terrorists struck a prime tourist location of Pahalgham in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing multiple people and injuring at least 20. The incident occurred around 3 pm when terrorists came down from the mountain in Baisaran valley and started firing at tourists, who frequent the place which is often dubbed as 'mini Switzerland' because of its lush green meadows.

The terror attack came at a time when US Vice President JD Vance is on a fourday visit to India along with his family. He was in Rajasthan on Tuesday.

### India's heritage sites see 19 per cent rise in footfall in 2023-24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

ndia's centrally protected ticketed monuments experienced an over 19 ■ per cent surge in footfall in 2023-24 compared to the pre-pandemic levels but this did not translate into higher revenue from ticket sales, which dropped by 2.83 per cent, official data shows.

An analysis of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) data, presented in the Rajya Sabha, covering 143 monuments shows a complex recovery picture for these key heritage sites, contextualised by broader national trends reported in the Ministry of Tourism's 'India Tourism Data Compendium 2024'.

The total footfall across these listed monuments increased by 19.35 per cent from approximately 4.60 crore in 2019-20 to 5.49 crore in 2023-24, the data showed. However, despite the surge in the

number of visitors, the combined revenue from ticket sales at these monuments saw a decline of 2.83 per cent during the fiveyear period, dropping from ₹312.54 crore in 2019-20 to ₹303.70 crore in 2023-24. This suggests a shift in the visitor com-

position at these sites. A direct compar-

ison of visitor data for centrally protect-

ed ticketed monuments between 2019-20 and 2023-24 reveals divergent trends. While domestic tourist visits surged by 21.75 per cent, from 4.36 crore in 2019-20 to 5.31 crore in 2023-24, foreign tourist visits decreased by 16.03 per cent, from 27.56 lakh in 2019-20 to 23.15 lakh in

2023-24, according to the data. The increase in the domestic visitor segment, coupled with a decline in the number of higher-paying foreign visitors compared to the pre-pandemic levels, appears to be the primary factor behind the stagnant overall monument revenue



mirrors the national picture, where Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India in 2023 (95.2 lakh) recovered to only about 87 per cent of the 2019 levels.

The resulting lower average revenue per visitor at the monuments, likely stemming from this altered visitor mix and the ASI's differential pricing structure, aligns with the broader national context where Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism overall stood at \$28.08 billion in 2023, lower than the 2019 peak of \$30.72 billion.

The broader tourism sector remains a significant economic contributor nationally, with its total (direct + indirect) share

supporting 7.62 crore jobs in 2022-23, according to the Tourism Satellite Account data. Performance varied dramatically across individual monuments.

While sites like Rajarani Temple (301 per cent), Ashokan Rock Edict (251 per cent) and Konark Sun Temple (53.5 per cent) saw massive revenue growth (2023-24 vs 2019-20), others like Tirumalai Nayak's Palace (98.2 per cent), Moovarkoil (90.1 per cent) and Agra Fort (47.2 per cent) saw sharp declines.

These stark differences likely stem from various site-specific factors which could range from restoration activities impacting access, changes in regional tourism promotion and infrastructure, or shifts in popular visitor circuits. Specific reasons for each monument's performance are not detailed in the analysed data.

The performance of iconic monu-

ments underscores the trend. The Taj Mahal saw the footfall jump by 31.27 per cent but the revenue rose only 1.48 per cent. Qutub Minar's footfall surged by 45.1 per cent and revenue by 18 per cent. Conversely, Humayun's Tomb saw footfall increased by 16.6 per cent while revenue dropped by 29.8 per cent. According to the India Tourism Data Compendium 2024, the Taj Mahal was the most popular among visitors in 2023-24 with 61 lakh domestic and 6.8

lakh foreign tourists. Konark Sun Temple (32 lakh) and Qutub Minar (31.2 lakh) were the next most popular among domestic tourists. For foreign visitors, it was Qutub Minar (2.2 lakh) and Agra Fort (2.18 lakh).

Visitor numbers, however, did not directly correlate with revenue generation.

The highest revenue earners among these monuments in 2023-24 were Taj Mahal (₹98.55 crore), Qutub Minar (₹23.80 crore), Red Fort (₹18.09 crore), Agra Fort (₹15.27 crore) and Konark Sun Temple (₹12.66 crore), according to ASI data. The data specific to India's protected monuments paints a picture of resilient visitor appeal, particularly drawing huge numbers of domestic travellers post-pandemic.

However, the financial recovery at these sites, measured by ticket revenue, still lags behind pre-pandemic benchmarks, reflecting the significant impact of the reduced number of foreign visitors compared to 2019 and the overall altered





### 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

nited 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

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 econom-

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

mid the intensifying India-China battle for influence in Sri Lanka, New Delhi has reason to be satis-Large field 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 inter-connected 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 pro-

vide 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. 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 largestever FDÍ (foreign direct investment) of \$3.7 billion for his country from China for a stateof-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.

### Overthinking is injurious to mental health



BY SAKSHI SETHI

verthinking 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 action. Journaling is another powerful tool. Writing down fect, 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

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)

### 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

<u>\_eaderspeak</u>

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 contin-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 mile-

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 Osloemphasises 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**

ınambam, the jewel of Vypeen sland 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 Ernakulam 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 Rijiju, 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

Please send your letter to the letterstopioneer@gmail.com. In not more than 400 words





# 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



ndia'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

#### **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 tractormounted 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.

#### **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 insur-

ance 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 tax-

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

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 ehind 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

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 — ARE

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PER CENT GST ON TRACTORS AND

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THAT ON LUXURY ITEMS.

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

he 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.

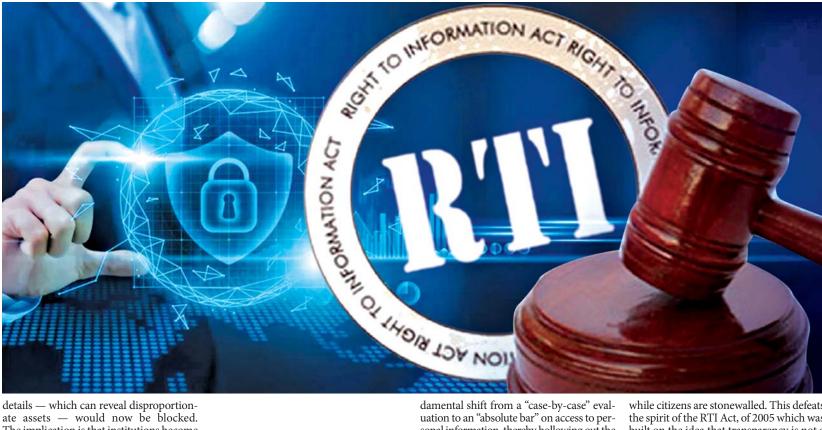
It underlines that there was already sufficient judicial restraint in place to protect genuinely private data. Landmark rulings like Girish Deshpande vs CIC (2013), and the Puttaswamy (2017) privacy judgment, drew clear boundaries between personal data and information relevant to public interest. Courts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

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 mutual-

ly 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 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 public duties. It is a fun-

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.

damental 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)

## **Helpless Mamata asks** teachers to return home

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA** Kolkata

s her Government continued to sink in the recruitment quagmire — in an election year — with ▶thousands of judicially sacked school staff including teachers camping for the past more than 36 hours outside the West Bengal State School Service Commission — braving sweltering heat demanding the publication of the list of "eligible" and "ineligible" candidates Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday appealed to the protesting employees to go back to their schools and "stop bothering about "tainted and non-tainted candidates till you get your salaries."

Even as a teeming army of dismissed school staff continued their sit-in demanding their jobs back from the Government and publishing list of the "tainted" and "untainted" employees the Chief Minister said, "it is not the duty of the teachers to bother about untainted or untainted staff... till they are getting their salaries... their job is to teach... we are here... the Government is here... the Court is here to distinguish between tainted and nontainted... you (teachers) don't need to bother about who is tainted and who is not." Banerjee was speaking at an administrative programme in Midnapore.

"I stand by your side and am trying to find out a solution... we assure that your jobs are safe for now, and you will get your salaries. Please return to your classes," Banerjee said reminding how in BJP ruled State Madhya Pradesh 69,000 candidates had lost their jobs in Vyapam Scam.



About 25,762 school employees lost their jobs as the Supreme Court early this month declared void the entire recruitment panel of 2016. The Court termed recruitment process a "tainted" one after the SSC failed to submit the list of candidates who had cleared the exams through questionable means. The Apex Court judgment came in an appeal filed against an earlier Calcutta High Court order which had cancelled the entire panel on charges of rampant corruption in appointment process.

The Court also directed the Government to hold fresh recruitment exams. Subsequent to the order the State Government had again petitioned the Apex Court to consider reinstating the teachers for now as mass removal of them from service would hamper the entire academic calendar and put students in trouble. Consequently to the Court granted a nine-month relaxation and allowed the present teachers to continue till December 31.

The teachers however would not relent saying they had tried to keep faith in the Chief Minister for the past several years but in vain. "We believed in her but she has always bluffed us... we are in a big trouble and we are not going to leave this place till the Government shoots us down," the teachers said.

When contacted Education Minister Bratya Basu advised the agitating teachers to return home and allow the Government to do its bit. He said "you (the teachers) should not do anything that will jeopardize your cause ... you should not come into the provocation of vested interests like CPI(M) or BJP ... you should not walk into any trap ... this may invite contempt of court.'

### TN Governor calls for V-Cs meet, invites Vice President

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Chennai

midst frosty ties with the ruling DMK dispensation and against the backdrop of the Supreme Court ruling in favour of the Tamil Nadu government, Governor RN Ravi has convened a meeting of Vice Chancellors of state universities, choosing to invite Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar for the inaugural session in the alluring hilly Nilgiris district for the week-end.

The meeting scheduled for April 25 and 26 has already triggered a negative response from the political parties here, particularly the Left, which has appealed

to the V-Cs to boycott the meeting.

A source said to media that the Vice President is scheduled to address the V-Cs during the inauguration and after attending various other programmes, he would visit Coimbatore on April 27 before leaving for the national capital.

According to a communique from the Raj Bhavan here, the annual conference of the Vice Chancellors of state, central and private universities/institutions of Tamil Nadu, was being organised at the Raj Bhavan, Udhagamandalam, for the fourth consecutive year. "The Vice President of India Jagdeep Dhankar has consented to be the chief guest and inaugurate the conference on April 25. RN Ravi, Governor-Chancellor of state universities of Tamil Nadu will preside over the conference," the release stated.

The conference aimed to have detailed deliberation and interactive sessions on a gamut of issues covering implementation of national credit framework, academic collaborations among universities, use of Artificial Intelligence to maximise learning outcomes, financial management in educational institutions, research excellence, promoting entrepreneurship, capacity building for learners, etc.

There would be a special address by Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India Prof Ajay Kumar Sood, on "Frontiers in Science and Technology." It may be recalled that Dhankar had expressed his resentment against the apex court ruling and said Article 142 has become a nuclear missile against democratic forces available to judiciary 24x7.

We cannot have a situation where you direct the President of India and on what basis? The only right you have under the Constitution is to interpret the Constitution under Article 145 (3). There it has to be five judges when Article 145 (3) was there, the number of judges in the Supreme Court was eight, 5 out of 8, now 5 out of 30 odd more," he said recently. The V-Cs meeting is being held after the Supreme Court's verdict that the 10 bills re-adopted by the state assembly, including those on appointing V-Cs and another elevating the chief minister as Chancellor of universities, were deemed as having received the assent.

A week ago, Chief Minister MK Stalin had addressed the V-Cs and registrars of state-run universities. Condemning the Governor for convening the meeting, VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan, an ally of the DMK, said as per the Supreme Court verdict, the CM assumed powers to nominate the Vice Chancellors of state universities and that Ravi had hardly any role to play in this regard now.

Another ally, TNCC president K Selvaperunthagai, said his party would initiate contempt proceedings against Ravi and also stage black flag demonstration during the Vice President and Governor's visit to Nilgiris on April 25.

#### 'Sharbat jihad': Will take down videos, Ramdev tells HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

**7**oga guru Ramdev on Tuesdav assured the Delhi High Court that he will immediately remove videos and social media posts relating to his purported "sharbat jihad" remarks on Hamdard's Rooh Afza. His statement came shortly after the court observed that the remarks shook its conscience and were indefensible. The counsel for Hamdard apprised the court that recently, while promoting Patanjali's 'gulab sharbat', Ramdev claimed that the money earned from Hamdard's Rooh Afza was used to build madrasas and mosques.

Ramdev defended his remarks, saying he did not name any brand or community. Justice Amit Bansal, who was hearing the plea by Hamdard National Foundation India against Ramdev's Patanjali Foods Ltd., said, "It shocks the conscience of the court. It is indefensible. You (counsel for Ramdev) take instructions from your client otherwise there will be a strong order." Senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Sandeep Sethi, representing Hamdard, said the case goes beyond disparagement and it was a case of creating "communal divide". "This amounts to hate speech. He says it is a sharbat jihad. He should carry on his business. Why is he troubling us?" Rohatgi said.

When the case was again taken up after some time, Ramdev's counsel submitted that he would immediately take down all advertisements, in print or video format, and social media posts relating to his controversial remarks.

# AI plane took wrong taxiway in December 2024: Air Accidents Investigations Bureau

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

n its final report, Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has mentioned situational awareness deficit and non-adherence to Air Traffic Controller's (ATC) instructions as among the probable causes for the incident at Goa's Manohar International Airport in December 2024. The final report stated that situational awareness deficit of the cockpit crew and failure to fully adhere to the air traffic controller's instructions probably led to an Air India aircraft taxiing on a wrong taxiway before aborting the

received line up and take-off clearance. However, the aircraft lined up on taxiway TWY A which was parallel to runway

As the aircraft started take-off roll on the wrong runway, ATC instructed the crew to abort the take-off and the aircraft was taxied back to the bay.

AAIB said the issuance of take-off clearance by ATC likely caused the crew's cognitive focus to shift entirely toward executing the take-off. At the time of incident, the aircraft was in contact with Tower on frequency 119.4 MHz.

There was two-way communication



take-off at the Airport.

The serious incident involving an A320 aircraft of Air India that was to operate the flight AIC2592 from Goa to Hyderabad on December 5, 2024, and there were a total of 158 people, including 7 crew members onboard the plane.

After ATC cleared the taxiing of the aircraft to the holding point of runway RWY28 via taxiway TWY A5, the plane

between both the aircraft and ATC. No abnormality was reported in any communication system. CVR recording and ATC recording were obtained with transcript.

"This shift may have diminished their situational awareness, resulting in expectation bias or cognitive overload, which prevented them from recognising the visual cues indicating they were at the TWY intersection instead of RWY inter-

section," the report said and added that both take-off clearance was issued by ATC and take-off checks completed by crew on TWY E near TWY intersection.

"The flight crew did not fully adhere to the ATC taxi instructions and failed to enter TWY A5 before lining up. If the crew had completed the taxi instructions and properly entered TWY A5 before turning for LINEUP, the incident could have been avoided," it noted.

Mentioning about the contributing factors for the incident, AAIB said the Pilot Monitoring (PM) was busy with head down as he was trying to login on Electronic Flight Bag (EFB) to bring the display back to 'on' mode to initiate the lineup checklist and did not check the departure runway when Pilot In Command (PIC) was incorrectly lining up on Taxiwav A.

Also, it said the airport is not equipped Guidance and Control System (A-SMGCS) which might have improved situational awareness for ATC with this topography.

AAIB has also made safety recommendations in the 22-page final report, including asking all operators to encourage their crew to cross-check their position using the AMM (Aircraft Moving Map) functionality of the EFB, if available as an additional measure alongside primary navigational instruments before take-off.

EFB systems include real-time GPS positioning and airport charts along with AMM, which allow flight crew to crosscheck their actual position on the airfield against the planned taxi route and assigned

According to AAIB, this verification process is a vital step in preventing errors such as taxiing to or departing from the wrong RWY/TWY, enhancing overall situational awareness and safety.

### Bengal CM lays foundation stone for power plant

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA** ■ Kolkata

fter years of industrial drought and after hosting about half-a-Adozen 'futile' business summits — Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee finally had a big reason to smile aloud in an election year. The reason: her State on Monday witnessed a big ticket investment in the power sector.

Banerjee on Monday layed the foundation stone of a 1600 MW thermal power plant worth ₹16,000 crore. The power plant — reportedly the biggest greenfield investment in eastern India — will be set up by the JSW Energy.

The setting up of the power plant at

Salboni in the jangal mahal area of West

Midnapore once afflicted by the Maoist terror, is also likely to afford Banerjee a point to attack the Left for failing to control the ultra Red menace which she finally put down successfully.

Calling the Salboni project "a dream for JSW," JSW chairman Sajjan Jindal said the strategic location of the plant would be of immense help to the company's goals

### **Terror returns** To Kashmir, tourists...

Continued from >> P1 Altaf Ahmad Wani, National Conference MLA from Pahalgam, described the attack as "cowardly" and said targeting innocent persons is against the teachings of

"The perpetrators of this dastardly act the first week of April, the Home Minister in Srinagar chaired a high-level

terrorism with special focus on the Jammu division. He also gave directions to ensure zero tolerance to infiltration. People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti also condemned

denounced". "Historically, Kashmir has welcomed

tourists warmly, making this rare incident deeply concerning. A thorough investigation is needed to bring the perpetrators to justice and examine potential security lapses. Ensuring visitor safety is paramount, and steps must be taken to prevent future attacks," she

During his recent visit to J and K in security review meeting, where he gave orders for the complete eradication of

the attack on tourists and said, "Such violence is unacceptable and must be

### **DDA** notice to Signature **Apartment residents**

from >> P1 "We don't know if we will get the rent compensation," he said. According to the e-tender, the selected agency will be responsible for dismantling the existing structures, and transporting the debris to a Municipal Corporation of Delhiapproved dumping site. In its order on November 2024, the Delhi High Court had instructed the DDA ensure the evacuation within three was shattered.

months and to provide rent assistance without delay.

Earlier this month, over 150 residents stormed into the DDA office in INA demanding action on the long-delayed vacating and reconstruction of Signature View Apartments, which have been deemed "unsafe." Security personnel attempted to block their entry, leading to

### A Royal wedding: British MP ties knot in desi style

Sharma graced the occasion, as did Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, state minister Satish Sharma, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's brother Pankaj Modi, Nepal's Pashupatinath Temple representative Ravi Lamichhane, and former Tamil Nadu BJP president K. Annamalai. Several senior IAS and IPS officers were also in attendance, adding a political gleam to the already glitzy event.

"It felt like a mini India-UK cultural summit," quipped a guest.

Navendu, known for his rise through trade union activism in the UK, was first elected to the British Parliament in 2019.

ed from >> P1 UK MP Virendra Since then, he has championed issues of social justice and minority representation, especially among the Indian community in Britain.

Yet, in the midst of his global politi-

cal life, it was the rituals of kanyadaan,

pheras, and ashirwad that seemed to bring the MP his brightest smiles. Today, he wasnot a politician. He was

a son, a nephew, a cousin, and a groomsoaking in love, rituals, and tradition. It was a wedding soaked in sincerity," said a family member.

As the fireworks lit up the Lucknow sky on Sunday night, one thing was clear: this wasnot just a wedding. It was a homecoming of the heart.

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

red from >> P1 The poll body further stated that all Indian elections are held as per Law. The scale and accuracy with which elections are held in India are widely acclaimed across the world.

Rejecting the claims, the EC underlined that during Assembly Elections in Maharashtra 6,40,87,588 electors, who reached the polling station from 7 am to 6 pm, voted. About 58 lakh votes were polled per hour on an average. Going by these average trends, nearly 116 Lakh vot-

ers could have voted in last two hours. "Therefore, casting of 65 lakhs votes by electors in two hours is much below the average hourly voting trends. 2. Further, in every polling booth, the voting progressed in front of the polling agents formally appointed by candidates/political parties. INC's nominated candidates or their authorized agents have not raised any substantiated allegations with regards to any kind of abnormal voting at the time of scrutiny before the Returning Officer (RO) and the Election Observers on the

next day," the EC said in a statement. The poll body further stated that electoral rolls in India including Maharashtra are prepared as per the Representation of People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. As per law, either just before the elections and/or once every year,

Special Summary Revision of the Electoral Rolls is conducted and a final copy of the Electoral Rolls is handed over to all the National/State political parties, including Indian National Congress (INC). "After the finalisation of these Electoral

Rolls during Maharashtra elections, as against 9,77,90,752 Electors, only a total of 89 appeals were filed before the 1st appellate authority (DM) and only first appeal was filed before the Second appellate authority (CEO). Therefore, it is amply clear that there was no grievance of INC or any other political parties before the conduct of Maharashtra Assembly Elections in 2024," it said

During the revision of Electoral Rolls, for 1,00,427 Polling Booths, along with 97,325 Booth Level Officers appointed by the EROs, 1,03,727 Booth Level Agents were also appointed by all Political Parties, including 27,099 by INC.

Therefore, these unsubstantiated allegations raised against the Electoral Rolls of Maharashtra are affront to the rule of law. 6. The Election Commission had brought out all these facts in its reply to INC on 24th December 2024 itself which is available on ECI's website. It appears that all these facts are completely being ignored while raising such issues again and again,"

### VP escalates attack...

ed from >> P1 The Supreme Court recently prescribed a three-month timeline for the President of India to decide on bills reserved by Governors for

Reacting to the directive, Dhankhar had said the judiciary cannot play the role of a "super Parliament" and get into the domain of the executive.

He said every word spoken by a constitutional functionary is guided by the supreme sublime interest of the nation.

"I find it conceivably intriguing that some have recently reflected that constitutional offices can be ceremonial or ornamental. Nothing can be far distanced from a wrong understanding of the role of everyone in this country constitutional functionary or a citizen,"

Stating that every one of them has a role, he said, "The soul of democracy resides and pulsates in every citizen. Democracy will blossom.

"Its values will get heightened. When (a) citizen is alert, citizen contributes and what a citizen contributes, there is no substitute for that." Dhankhar also said there is no visu-

authority above Parliament. "Part of 'We the People' is an atom in democracy and that atom has atomic power. That atomic power is reflected during elections and that is why we are tion in another matter.

alisation in the Constitution of any

a democratic nation," Dhankhar, who is also the Rajya Sabha chairperson, under-

Voicing concern over the recent Supreme Court ruling prescribing a timeline for the president to decide on Bills, Dhankhar on Friday said India had not bargained for a democracy where judges will legislate and perform executive functions and act as a "super Parliament".

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court had, for the first time, prescribed that the President should decide on the bills reserved for her consideration by governors within three months from the date such reference is received.

"There is a directive to the president by a recent judgment... We never barained for democracy for this day. President being called upon to decide in time-bound manner, and if not, becomes law," Dhankhar said.

The vice president was criticised for questioning the judiciary, with critics terming his remarks "unconstitutional". In an apparent response to Dhankhar's super Parliament" remark, a top court bench on Monday said "as it is, we are alleged of encroaching upon the parliamentary and executive functions".

Justice B R Gavai, who was heading a bench also comprising Justice Augustine George Masih, made a similar observa-

### Women outshine men in **UPSC** examination results

has reported 1,129 vacancies - 180 in IAS, 55 in IFS, 147 in IPS, 605 posts in different central Group A services and 142 in Group B services — to be filled through the civil services examination 2024, it said. The top 25 candidates comprise 11 women and 14 men. Their educational qualifications range from graduation in engineering, humanities, science, commerce, medical science, and architecture from premier institutions of the country, such as Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), National Institute of Technology (NIT), VIT, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), University of Delhi, and

University of Allahabad, the UPSC said. The top 25 successful candidates have opted for a wide range of optional subjects in the written (main) examination, including anthropology, commerce and accountancy, geography, mathematics, philosophy, physics, political science and international relations, public administration, sociology, and literature of the

Tamil language, the statement said. The recommended candidates also include 45 persons with benchmark disability, comprising 12 orthopedically handicapped, eight visually challenged, 16 hearing impaired, and nine with multiple disabilities, it said.

The candidature of 241 recommended candidates has been kept provisional, the UPSC said, adding that the result of one candidate has been withheld.

Another 230 successful candidates have been put on a reserve list, the commission said.

The UPSC has a 'Facilitation Counter' near the examination hall on its campus in Delhi. Candidates can obtain information or clarification regarding their exams or recruitment on all working days between 10 am and 5 pm in person or over the phone by dialling 23385271/ 23381125/23098543, it said.

The result will also be available on the UPSC website — www.Upsc.Gov.In and the marks will be available on the website within 15 days from the date of declaration of the result, the statement said.

Aditva Srivastava, a trainee IPS officer. had topped the civil services examination 2023. Ânimesh Pradhan, Donuru Ananya Reddy, P K Sidharth Ramkumar, and Ruhani had secured second, third, fourth





# **Russia batters Ukraine as** peace talks come to crux

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Kyiv

ussian drones battered the Ukrainian port city of Odesa in a nighttime attack, local authorities said Tuesday, less than 24 hours after a purported Easter ceasefire unilaterally declared by Moscow ended and just over a day before Ukrainian, British, French and US officials are due to meet in London to discuss the war.

Anticipation is building over whether diplomatic efforts can stop more than three years of fighting since Russia's full-scale invasion of its neighbour.

Trump said last week negotiations were "coming to a head" and insisted that neither side is "playing" him in his push to end the grinding war.

This came after Secretary of State Marco Rubio suggested last week the US might soon back away from negotiations altogether if they don't progress. He spoke in Paris after talks among U.S., Ukrainian and European officials produced outlines for steps toward peace and appeared to make some long-awaited progress.

A new meeting is expected Wednesday in London, and Rubio suggested it could be decisive in determining whether the Trump administration continues its involvement.

Odesa came under a "massive attack" by Russian drones overnight, injuring at least three people, the head of Odesa regional administration, Oleh Kiper, wrote on his Telegram page Tuesday.

A residential building in a densely



populated urban area, civilian infrastructure and an educational facility were hit,

The Ukrainian air force said Russia fired 54 Shahed and decoy drones at Ukraine overnight, marking a resumption of longrange attacks that have blasted civilian areas and sown terror throughout the war.

Russia has stepped up in the past months its use of Shahed drones, expanding its production of the weapon and refining its tactics, the International Institute for Strategic Studies said in a recently pub-

After Putin declared a unilateral cease-

fire on Saturday, Ukraine said it was ready to reciprocate but said Russian attacks were continuing. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Russia violated the ceasefire more than 2,900 times.

The Associated Press was unable to verify whether a ceasefire was in place along the roughly 1,000-kilometer front line.

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.

### Global tributes pour in for Pope Francis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Vatican City

rief and tributes for Pope Francis were shared around the world Tuesday, a day after the popular pontiff died at age 88.

Cardinals will meet at the Vatican Tuesday to begin scheduling Pope Francis' funeral and burial, planning the conclave to elect his successor and making other decisions about running the Catholic Church.

History's first Latin American pontiff charmed the world with his humble style and concern for the poor but alienated many conservatives with critiques of capitalism

and climate change. Francis recently returned to the Vatican after 38 days in a hospital for a respiratory crisis that developed into double pneumonia, the longest hospitalisation of his 12-vear papacy. He last appeared in public on Sunday with an Easter blessing and popemobile tour through a cheering crowd in St

Peter's Square. No funeral date has been announced. The next pope is yet to be decided.

Here's the latest: AUSTRALIAN CANDIDATES CANCEL CAM-

PAIGN EVENTS: Both Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and opposition leader Peter Dutton cancelled campaign events planned for Tuesday out of respect for the late pontiff, as early voting began for a May 3 general election.

Flags were flown at half staff from government buildings across the country where a 2021 census found 20 per cent of the population were Catholics.

Albanese was raised as a Catholic but chose to be sworn in as prime minister when he was elected in 2022 by making a secular affirmation rather than by taking an oath on a Bible. Albanese attended a Mass in honour of the pope in Melbourne's St Patrick's Cathedral on Tuesday morning.
"I try not to talk about my faith in pub-

lic," Albanese told reporters, but added "At times like this, I think what people do is they draw on who they are and certainly my Catholicism is just a part of me."

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

an Anglican school, planned to go to a church service in Sydney.

"I don't think it's a day for overt politicking at all. I think that the day is best spent

reflecting," Dutton told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

INDIA DECLARES THREE DAYS OF MOURNING:

The Indian flag flew at half-staff on Tuesday at all government buildings as the country observed three days of mourning as a mark of the respect for Pope Francis.

The Indian flag will be flown half-staff on government buildings across the country for the next two days, as well as on the day of the pontiff's funeral, the Home Ministry said

TAIWAN'S CATHOLICS REMEMBER FRANCIS: Members of Taiwan's Catholic community gathered at a church in the capital Taipei for a sombre mass as believers prayed and reflected on Francis' spiritual legacy.

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

# Pope's funeral for Saturday morning, with public viewing starting Wednesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Vatican

ardinals have taken their first decisions following the death of Pope Francis, setting Saturday as the date for his funeral and allowing ordinary faithful to begin paying their final respects starting Wednesday, when his casket is brought into St. Peter's Basilica.

The cardinals met for the first time Tuesday in the Vatican's synod hall to chart the next steps before a conclave begins to choose Francis' successor, as condolences poured in from around the world grieving history's first Latin

The cardinals set the funeral for Saturday at 10 am in St. Peter's Square, to be celebrated by the dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista

US President Donald Trump has announced he and first lady Melania Trump plan to attend Saturday's funeral Argentine President Javier Milei is also

Francis died Monday at age 88 after suffering a stroke that put him in a coma and led his heart to fail. He had been recovering in his apartment after being hospitalized for five weeks with pneumonia. He made his last public appearance Sunday, delivering an Easter blessing and making what would be his final greeting to followers from his popemobile, looping around St. Peter's Square.

In retrospect, his Easter appearance from the same loggia where he was introduced to the world as the first pope from the Americas on March 13, 2013, was a perfect bookend to a 12-year papacy that sought to shake up the church and return it to its Gospel-mandated mission of caring for the poorest.

"He gave himself to the end," said Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the head of the Italian bishops' conference and considered a possible contender to be next pope. "To go out to meet everyone, speak to everyone, teach us to speak to everyone, to bless everyone." The first images of Francis' body were released Tuesday, showing him in the wooden casket, in red vestments and his bishop's miter, with the Vatican secretary of state praying over him in the chapel of the Domus Santa Marta hotel where he lived and died.

In his final will, Francis confirmed he would be buried at St. Mary Major basilica, which is outside the Vatican and home to his favorite icon of the Virgin Mary. Before and after every foreign trip, Francis would go to the basilica to pray before the Byzantine-style painting that features an image of Mary, draped in a blue robe, holding the infant Jesus, who in turn holds a jeweled golden book.

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 presided over the rituals.

icon. He returned April 12 to pray before the Madonna for the last time.

Bells tolled in chapels, churches and cathedrals around the world and flags flew at half staff in Italy, India, Taiwan and the U.S. After Francis' death was announced by the Vatican camerlengo. Soccer matches in Italy and Argentina were suspended in honor of the Argentine pope who was a lifelong fan of the San Lorenzo soc-

World leaders praised Francis for his moral leadership and compassion, while ordinary faithful remembered his simplicity and humanity.

Francis chose not to live in the palace, though, but in a two-room suite in Santa Marta on the other side of Vatican City. He died there and his body was transferred to the hotel chapel in the lobby, where the private viewing was being held Tuesday for Vatican officials and members of the pontifical household.

In changes made by Francis last year, his body was not placed in three wooden coffins, as it had been for previous popes. Rather, Francis was placed in a simplified wooden coffin with a zinc coffin inside.

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



"Like every Argentine, I think he was a rebel," said 23-year-old Catalina Favaro, who had come to pay her respects in the Buenos Aires church where Francis discovered his priestly vocation. "He may have been contradictory, but that was nice,

In East Timor, where Francis' final outdoor Mass drew nearly half of the population last September, President Jose Ramos-Horta praised Francis' courage. 'Papa Francisco was a brave man who was not afraid to speak out against the rulers of the world who seek war, but do not ant to seek peace," Ramos-Horta said.

"He challenged the powerful to act with ustice, called nations to welcome the stranger, and reminded us that our common home - this Earth - is a gift we must protect for future generations," said Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu, who is Muslim. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and has around 30 million Catholics, representing about 14% of the total population.

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,

be put on an elevated bier but will just be be placed simply facing the pews, with the Paschal candle nearby.

"He was a pope who didn't change his path when it came to getting dirty," Francis' vicar for Rome, Cardinal Baldassarre Reina, said in a Mass in his honor. "For him, poor people and migrants were the sacrament of Jesus."

After the funeral, there are nine days of official mourning, known as the "novendiali." During this period, cardinals arrive in Rome and meet privately before the conclave.

To give everyone time to assemble, the conclave must begin 15-20 days after the "sede vacante" - the "vacant See" - is declared, although it can start sooner if the cardinals agree.

Once the conclave begins, cardinals vote in secret sessions in the Sistine Chapel. After voting sessions, the ballots are burned in a special stove. Black smoke indicates that no pope has been elected, while white smoke indicates that the cardinals have chosen the next head of the Catholic Church.

The one who has secured two-thirds of the votes wins. If he accepts, his election is announced by a cardinal from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica who tells the world "Habemus Papam," Latin for "We have a pope.



### **Harvard sues Trump** administration over grants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Boston

rarvard University announced Monday that it was suing the ▲Trump administration to halt a freeze on more than USD 2.2 billion in grants after the institution said it would defy the Trump administration's demands to limit activism on campus.

In a letter to Harvard earlier this month, the Trump administration had called for broad government and leadership reforms at the university as well as changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded that the university audit views of diversity on campus, and stop recognising some student clubs, Harvard President Alan Garber said the university would not bend to the government's demands. Hours later, the government froze billions of dollars in fed-

'The Government has not - and cannot - identify any rational connection between antisemitism concerns and the medical, scientific, technological, and other research it has frozen that aims to save American lives, foster American success, preserve American security, and maintain Âmerica's position as a global leader in innovation," the university wrote in its lawsuit.

"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 interest in furthering American innovation and progress," it added. The Trump administration, in the April

11 letter, told Harvard to impose tougher discipline on protesters and to screen international students for those who are "hostile to the American values.'

It also called for broad leadership reforms at the university, changes to admissions policies and the removal of college recognition for some student clubs. The government also demanded Harvard audit its faculty and student body to ensure wide viewpoints in every department and, if necessary, diversify by admitting additional students and hiring new faculty. Last Monday, Harvard said it would not comply, citing the First Amendment. The following day, Trump took to his Truth Social platform, questioning whether the university should lose its tax-exempt status "if it keeps pushing political, ideological, and terrorist inspired/supporting Sickness?"

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.

# Trump allies are increasingly turning on one another

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Washington

**◄**he infighting and backstabbing that plagued President Donald Trump's first term have returned as a threat to his second, with deepening fissures over trade, national security and questions of personal loyalty.

The latest turmoil threatens to engulf the Pentagon, where Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth has pushed out top advisers and faces fresh controversy over sharing sensitive information about airstrikes in Yemen outside of classified channels.

A former Pentagon spokesperson who was ousted last week wrote in Politico that Trump should fire Hegseth for presiding over a "full-blown meltdown."

The interpersonal drama is not - at least yet - a dominant plot line of Trump's return to the White House. But its reemergence after a period of relative discipline in his ranks reflects a turbulent management style that has been suppressed or papered over, not reformed.

Trump's national security team was recently rattled by an Oval Office visit from Laura Loomer, a far-right conspiracy theorist who has been questioning his staff's trustworthiness. The Republican president fired some of the officials, emboldening Loomer to continue scrutinizing people across the administration.

In an interview with independent jour-

nalist Tara Palmeri released on Monday, Loomer mocked the idea that the White House is "one big happy family."

"The advisers don't get along with each other," she said. "The heads of agencies

#### don't get along with each other." **Tariff trouble causes friction** for the Trump team

Much of the tension is connected to Trump's determination to use tariffs to rebalance the global economy, with officials often contradicting each other and occasionally turning to insults. Trump adviser Elon Musk, the billionaire entrepreneur whose companies could suffer from higher costs brought on by import taxes, sharply criticized Peter Navarro, Trump's top counsellor on trade, as "dumber than a sack of bricks."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt dismissed the idea of growing dissension within the administration, saying there are "far more examples of the president's team working together enthusiastically and collaboratively to advance the administration's goals."

"The numbers and results of this administration speak for themselves," she said. "The president and his team are getting work done."

Trump has always had a high tolerance for chaos, shunning traditional policy deliberations to entertain divergent opinnegotiating tool. He's spent years fostering a competitive atmosphere among his staff members, who are often chosen for their devotion and penchant for aggression.

ions and viewing unpredictability as a

But now the increasing strife underscores the risks for more turmoil in the months ahead, as Trump presses forward with a dramatic overhaul of the federal bureaucracy, international trade, foreign policy and more.

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

John Bolton, who served as national security adviser in Trump's first term before writing a tell-all book critical of the president's inner circle, said the drama reflects the lack of a consistent ideology and the inexperience of many administration officials. "The only thing they have in common is the belief that they should show personal fealty to Trump," Bolton said. "That got them the job. That may in fact keep them in the job. But it shows how fundamentally unserious they are."

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

She earned a reputation for imposing an unusual level of order on Trump's chaotic orbit - though she carefully avoided trving to control Trump or his impulses - and he praised her as "the ice maiden."

During Trump's first term, he had four chiefs of staff - one of them serving in an acting capacity for more than a year. The second, former US Marine Gen. John Kelly, became a sharp critic of the president after he left the job, describing him as a fascist during the 2024 election.

#### White House closes ranks around Hegseth

With his new administration, Trump has surrounded himself with lovalists, and he's been reluctant to throw anyone overboard in response to negative coverage from the mainstream media, which he considers to be an enemy. Allies say the hesitance to make personnel changes in this term is meant to deny giving a win to critics, even if it means leaving troubled officials in

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.

### NY Indian Film Festival to pay tribute to Shyam Benegal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New York

≺he legacy of legendary Indian filmmaker Shyam Benegal will be honoured at the New York Indian Film Festival here, which will celebrate its silver jubilee this year with a repertoire of diverse cinematic works featuring celebrated artists such as Manoj Bajpayee, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, James Ivory and Rasika Dugal.

The festival, the longest-running and prestigious US festival dedicated to Indian independent cinema, will celebrate its milestone 25th edition here from June 20-22, spotlighting "bold new voices, storied auteurs, and urgent narratives" from the Indian subcontinent and its global dias-

"What began as a grassroots platform

is now a global stage for Indian independent cinema," Festival Director Aseem Chhabra said in a press statement

"This year's lineup is one of our most powerful and wide-ranging to date. From deeply personal documentaries to regional narratives that rarely reach global audiences, the 25th edition of NYIFF reflects the evolving language of Indian

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

It will also honour the work of Oscarwinning film director James Ivory, with "An Arrested Moment", a short documentary from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, directed by Dev Benegal. The film explores Ivory's "enduring fascination with Indian art and culture?

The 2025 NYIFF lineup includes 22 feature-length films-18 narratives and four documentaries-spanning more than a dozen languages and regions. The festival program also includes 21 short narrative and documentary films.

From Tamil and Odia to Assamese, Hindi, and Malayalam, the selection of the works to be showcased at the festival "reflects both the diversity and the evolv-

ing language of Indian cinema," it said. Chhabra said Siddiqui, who has won two NYIFF best actor trophies, will be

attending this year's festival.

Executive Director of the Indo-American Arts Council, which presents NYIFF, Suman Gollamudi said the festival has long been a space where India's cinematic legacy meets its most daring futures. "At 25, we are not just celebrating the past-we are investing in what's

The 2025 festival opens with the East Coast premiere of the Manoj Bajpayee, Priyanka Bose and Deepak Dobriyal 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.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA San Francisco

ndia'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

- 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

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 longterm 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-

India's growth momentum calls for a 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 tenthlargest 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-valueadded, 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.

# India, US have finalised terms for BTA: USTR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

ndia and the US have finalised the terms of reference outlining the I roadmap for negotiations of the proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), according to a statement issued by the

US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer said that these ongoing talks will help achieve balance and reciprocity by opening new markets for American goods and addressing unfair practices that harm US workers.

"India's constructive engagement so far has been welcomed, and I look forward to creating new opportunities for workers, farmers, and entrepreneurs in both countries," he said in a statement.

"I am pleased to confirm that USTR and India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry have finalised the Terms of Reference to lay down a roadmap for the negotiations on reciprocal trade," Ambassador Greer said.

He claimed that there is a "serious" lack of reciprocity in the trade relationship with India. India and the US on Monday said that they made "significant progress" in negotiations for a mutually beneficial bilateral trade pact as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US Vice President JD Vance held wide-ranging talks here.

Vance is the first US vice president to visit India in 12 years after Joe Biden visited New Delhi in 2013.

On February 13, the two countries announced to negotiate the BTA. It was decided to finalise the first phase of the pact by the fall (September-October) this

to the USTR, the United States is looking at increasing market access, reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers, and negotiating a robust set of additional commitments to ensure long-term benefits.

US has long recognised significant trade barriers with India and as a result, the US ran a USD 45.7 billion goods trade deficit with India in 2024, a 5.1 per cent

The US total goods trade with India was estimated at \$129.2 billion in 2024. According to the US, India's average applied tariff is 17 per cent, among the highest of the world's largest economies

(USD 2.2 billion) increase over 2023, the statement said. "The US welcomed the tariff reductions India implemented during the Prime Minister's (Narendra Modi) meeting with President (Donald) Trump in February and its willingness to further reduce tariffs on US products as part of the BTA," it added.

The US total goods trade with India was estimated at USD 129.2 billion in 2024. According to the US, India's average applied tariff is 17 per cent, among the highest of the world's largest economies, while America's average applied tariff is 3.3 per cent.

Īndia's average applied tariff rate on agricultural products is 39 per cent while the USA's is just 5 per cent. "In addition to tariffs, technical barriers to trade, regulatory barriers, and restrictions on access to the market in the services, industrial, and agricultural sectors also reduce US exports to India," it said.

On April 2, President Trump imposed a 10 per cent tariff on all countries and individualised reciprocal higher tariffs on nations with which the US has the largest trade deficits in order to level the

playing field.
"The ToR (Terms of Reference) announcement with India is a critical step forward in negotiations with India to achieve reciprocal trade with one of our most strategic partners and deliver results to the American People," the statement

ToRs include issues such as tariffs, non-tariff barriers, rules of origin, and customs facilitation.

### FM Sitharaman invites global IT companies to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ San Francisco

¬inance 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

**Gold breaches** 

**₹1 lakh mark** 

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

### ITC Hotels signs 14 Fortune Hotels in 2024-25



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

TC 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.

had a portfolio of 78 hotels comprising 56 operational hotels across India and Nepal with 22 hotels in pipeline, it

"As we enter this new financial year, we reaffirm our commitment to sustained PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

old 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

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 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  $\ref{22,650}$ 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.

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

Centres of Excellence.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

≺raders' 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, respective-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 'lux-

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

Dhairyasheel 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 ecommerce 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 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 cohibition 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 per-

mitted 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

They also stated that accountability of ecommerce 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 inventoryled 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

#### Tenure of RBI Deputy Governor extended As of March 31, 2025, Fortune brand The new signings were in Goa, Kolkata, Chennai, Rishikesh, Indore, "Additionally, weakness in the US dollar PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi Bhimtal, Mukteshwar, Gorakhpur, following the tensions between Trump and till May 2026, according to sources. Mohali, Surat and Ayodhya, it said, This is the second one-year extension

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

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

### **Rupee falls 8** paise to settle at 85.23 against **US dollar**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

The rupee consolidated in a narrowrange 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

### Sensex, Nifty rise for 6th day on row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumba

growth and excellence in hospitality," ITC

Hotels Ltd Managing Director Anil

He further said, "This footprint expan-

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 inter-

national hotel opening in Nepal at

adding that with these Fortune Hotels

now has presence in over 65 cities across

sion endeavours to offer travellers access

to prime locations and Fortune's comfort-

Chadha said.

able hospitality."

Bhaktapur.

India and Nepal.

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 microfi-

nance 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

From the Sensex pack, ITC, enchmark equity indices Sensex
and Nifty advanced on Translation

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 a review of the MFI business to exam- 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

# India finish third in ISSF World Cup

ndian shooters finished third at the ISSF World Cup after the pair of Prithviraj Tondaiman and Pragati ■Dubey failed to reach the medals round in the trap mixed team event, here on the final day.

Simranpreet Kaur Brar fetched India's final medal in the women's 25m pistol event on Monday, taking the country's tally to seven, including two gold, four silver and a bronze.

While the USA also ended with seven medals, they edged ahead of India to take second place, courtesy of a higher goldmedal count.

China finished on top of the standings with four gold, three silver and six bronze

The standout performer for India was 18-year-old Suruchi Inder Singh, who claimed both of the country's gold medals. She outgunned Paris Olympics double medallist Manu Bhaker to win the 10m air pistol title before teaming up with Saurabh Chaudhary to secure gold in the mixed team event. In the trap mixed team event on Monday, Tondaiman and Dubey post-



ed a combined score of 134 to finish eighth, while the other Indian pair of Lakshay and Neeru ended 13th with the total score of 128. Only the top four teams advance to the medal rounds.

K Sultan Singh, Secretary General, National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), seemed pleased with the young Indian

"It was a young squad and the exposure of going half-way around the world into alien conditions, adapting to the surroundings, the ranges, and then bringing out your best for India, will be an experience which will hold them in good stead," Singh

was quoted as saying in a press release. "Remember, the next LA Olympics will be a similar experience. Having said

that, given the quality of competition, the squad as they have been doing generally over the years, performed splendidly," added Singh.

In the back-to-back World Cups in Argentina and Peru, Indian shooters reached a total of 32 finals, including medal matches in the mixed events and returned with 15 medals including six gold.

The 18-year-old Suruchi was the most successful, bringing home three gold and one bronze medal.

Arya Borse was the other World Cup debutant to shine, making it to three finals and returning with two silver medals in the mixed team rifle event.

"It gives us immense pleasure to look at the depth we have developed in the sport. There are so many accomplished international shooters who were back home and not part of this tour and still we have produced such results. This shows that Indian shooting is moving in the right direction,"

The next international assignment for Indian shooters will only for shotgun exponents who will compete in the Cyprus World Cup, beginning in the first week of

### Pole vaulter Meena breaks own national record

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Kochi

xtending his sparkling form this season, Madhya Pradesh pole ⊿vaulter Dev Kumar Meena broke his own national record with an effort of 5.35m on his way to gold medal-winning show on the second day of the National Federation Senior Championships here Tuesday.

The 19-year-old Meena dominated the men's pole vault event as he bettered his earlier national mark of 5.32m which he had scaled while finishing on top during the Uttarakhand National Games in February.

Tamil Nadu athletes M Gowtham (5.15m) and G Reegan (5.10m) took the silver and bronze respectively. Former national record holder S Siva - also of Tamil Nadu — finished fourth with an effort of 5.05m.

Meena, however, fell short of the Asian Championships qualification mark of 5.51m set by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). Asian Championships will be held in Gumi, South Korea from May 27-31. Pole vault is one event in which there is a huge gap between Indian and international athletes.

The Asian record in men's pole vault is 6m, set by Ernest John Obiena of the Philippines in 2023, while the world record stands in the name of Swedish superstar Armand Duplantis at 6.27m.

Meena said he was a bit disappointed at missing out on the Asian Championships qualification mark.

"I wanted to raise the bar but there was light drizzle and my coach advised aganist continuing," Meena said.

On the tracks, there was intense competition in the women's 400m in which Uttar Pradesh's Rupal Chaudhary, one of the pre-race favourites, conserved every ounce of her energy to explode at the home stretch and win the gold with a time of 52.55 seconds.

Tamil Nadu's Asian Games medallist

Vithya Ramraj (52.81 seconds), who had a good lead in the first 300m, couldn't switch gear in the last 100m. She was edged out by Rupal on the tape.

"I just wanted to catch up and shifted to another gear as the first 200m was slow," Rupal said after winning the gold

Vithya said she paid the price for running at top gear in the first 300m.

Top six runners in the women's 400m dipped below the Asian Championships qualification time of 53.80 seconds.

Asian Games medallist Jyothi Yarraji too expressed her satisfaction in winning women's 100m hurdles gold with a time of 13.23 seconds and bettering the Asian Championships qualification time of 13.26 seconds.

Yarraji said she had pulled her right hamstring three weeks back and couldn't dip below 13 seconds.

"Kochi was my only chance for me to make the cut for the Asian Championships. Hence, I had no choice but to compete," said Yarraji who holds the national record of 12.78 seconds.

In men's 110m hurdles, national record holder Tejas Ashok Shirse of Maharashtra clinched the gold with a below-par time of 13.65 seconds. He missed the Asian Championships qualifying time of 13.56 seconds. His NR stands at 13.42 seconds.

National record holder high jumper Jeswin Aldrin is set to miss next month's Asian Championships in Korea as he was beaten by P David of Tamil Nadu for the

David jumped 7.94m while Aldrin of Reliance produced an effort of 7.83m well below his national record distance of

The Asian Championships qualifying distance is set at 8.07m.

Meanwhile, Sarvesh Anil Kushare of Maharashtra won gold in men's high jump after clearing 2.26m. He bettered the Asian Championships qualifying mark of 2.23m.

### I am desperate to make most of opportunity: Kujur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Perth

rafted into the senior national women's team following an impressive performance in the Hockey India League with JSW Soorma Club, young midfielder Ajmina Kujur is desperate to make the most of the opportunity in the upcoming five-match away series against Australia.

India are set to play two games against Australia A on April 26 and 27, followed by three matches against the Australian senior team on May 1, 3, and 4 at the Perth Hockey Stadium.

"I am grateful that they have given me a chance to play now so I have to give my

senior team camp but I didn't make it into the team. Now that I have been given this chance, I am going to ensure I make the most of it," Kujur said in a Hockey India

Training with the seniors has been a wonderful experience. I am learning a lot and I am excited to play with them ahead - AJMINA KUJUR, HOCKEY PLAYER

release upon landing in Australia. Kujur had been training in the senior national camp in SAI, Bengaluru, since

March 23 in preparation for the tour. "Training with the seniors has been a

100 per cent. Two years ago, I was in the wonderful experience. I am learning a lot and I am excited to play with them ahead

Everyone has enjoyed training with each other and now it is time for us to give it our best against Australia, the 23-year-old said. "The senior players are really helpful, especially Sushila di (Sushila Chanu) who has supported me a lot during the camp. She tells me every time I make a mistake and has taught me how to play to my strengths. I also tend to think a lot when I make an error but the senior players have helped me cope with it and I am a lot more confident now."

At the start of the year, Kujur played a crucial role in the HIL (Women) as she featured in all the seven matches for runners-

Next, she played the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship for Odisha and, although her team was

knocked out in the pool stage of Division

A, she dished out a stand-out performance

in the midfield. "I have been focusing on my fitness a lot more, which I think has really helped me improve my game," she said. Kujur started playing hockey at the age of 11.

Coming from Sundargarh district in Odisha which is famous for its rich hockey culture, the sport has always been a part of her life. She was first introduced to hockey when she saw her father and brothers play in their village.

### Former players to hone coaching skills under foreign cocch

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

he Badminton Association of India (BAI) wants former top Indian players to hone their coaching skills under foreign coaches and work with junior players but also strive to save the Indian style of play from fading. BAI had advertised coaching position

and received an overwhelming response with as many as 49 former players applying for the job.

"We invited applications from the top

players who want to come into coaching with BAI and SAI. We got 49 applications out of which we have shortlisted 10-11. The list has gone to SAI for approval," BAI General Secretary Sanjay Mishra said in an interaction.

serving the traditional Indian playing style, (NCoE). "These coaches will be rotated in question of 'who after Sindhu?' or 'who go fitness tests thrice a year.

which he believes is slowly fading due to the increasing influence of foreign coaches. "The Indian style is somewhat fading. Prakash (Padukone) sir used deception to win the All England, (Pullela) Gopichand played net game to win. But now, under foreign coaches, the Indian shuttlers are playing a more physical game, more like the Indonesian or Malaysian style."

"Maybe our physique also doesn't fully support that kind of play. After playing one or two games the body may not be able to sustain the tempo. So these Indian coaches can pass on our style apart from learning the foreign style which may give better results," he added.

BAI plans to rotate the shortlisted coaches across training centres. Initially they will be assigned to junior players at entres of

the centres. We want these coaches to work with junior players at the NCoE before moving to elite coaching.

The BAI is also focussing on the development of junior players as it wants to create a "chain of talent".

These coaches will be rotated in the centres. We want these coaches to work with junior players at the NCoE before moving to elite coaching

- SANJAY MISHRA, BAI GENERAL SECRETARY

"Our focus at the NCoE is on junior players. Earlier, we would just hold 15-day camps before tournaments. But now, with the NCoE, they have a consistent space to

train together," he said.

after Prannoy?' will be answered." "In China if top two are not playing, the

third string player also goes and wins a tournament. We want to develop a similar system, prepare a chain of players so that even if the top two are not available then third best player has the capability to reach the semifinals."

Mishra added that the top players will be given a choice to train across the three NCoEs in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Guwahati where one foreign coach will also be stationed.

Currently, Malaysia's Tan Kim Her works at NCoE in Hyderabad and Indonesian Irwansyah Adi Pratama in Bengaluru while South Korea's Park Tae-Sang, who coaches junior players, works in Guwahahti.

He also added that shuttlers will under

### **Nottingham Forest beat** Tottenham in Premier league

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

ottingham Forest beat Tottenham 2-1 to move into third place in the Premier League and deepen the gloom at White Hart Lane.

Forest was clinical in front of goal and

2-0 up within 16 minutes against a team that showed many of the same failings that have dogged it all season. Elliot Anderson's deflected shot bagged the opener after five minutes and Chris

Wood added a second with a header 11 minutes later. Between the two, Wood had a goal chalked off for offside. Although Spurs controlled possession in the second half it took it until the 87th

minute to score, when Richarlison netted a header. The result was another disappointing one for Spurs fans, who booed their team off at the final whistle. Although Ange Postecoglou has guid-

ed the team to a Europa League semifinal, Monday's defeat was its 18th in 33 Premier League games and left it in 16th place.

For Forest, meanwhile, it was a return to winning ways after defeats by Everton

In third place, it was one point above Newcastle, two above Manchester City and

three above Chelsea and Aston Villa.

They will be joined in the top tier next season by Leeds United and Burnley, both of which guaranteed spots in the Premier League with wins. Leeds beat Stoke City 6-0 and Burnley

beat Sheffield United 2-1 to open unassailable leads in the second-tier Championship with only two games remaining.

The top two gain automatic promotion and the next four go into the playoffs for the last remaining spot.

The victories ensure another two US-owned clubs will enjoy the estimated revenue uplift of around \$180 million that comes with a place in England's top tier.

Leeds is owned by the San Franciscobased 49ers Enterprises group, members of whom include American golfers Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas. Red Bull, the energy drink company whose other soccer interests include owning Leipzig in Germany, bought a minority stake in the club last May.

Burnley, meanwhile, has been majority-owned since 2020 by the ALK Capita investment group. The New York group is fronted by US Businessman Alan Pace and counts former NFL star JJ Watts as a notable shareholder.

### Super Cup: Chennaiyin FC vs Mumbai City FC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bhubaneswar

ed by forward Connor Shields, Chennaiyin FC have named a ✓strong squad for their Kalinga Super Cup 2025 opener against Mumbai City FC here on Wednesday.

The tournament winners will earn a qualifying play-off spot for the AFC Champions League Two.

Apart from Shields, head coach Owen Covle has also named standout Indian performers Irfan Yadwad and Jiteshwor Singh, among others.

mer aiming to become the outright topscorer of the Super Cup.
With eight combined goals across

multiple editions, Jordan, the leading

cup scorer in 2023, is a goal shy of Sunil

Chukwu lead the attack, with the for-

Wilmar Jordan Gil and Daniel Chima

Chhetri at the top of the all-time standings. Chennaiyin head into the tournament on the back of a convincing 5-2 win over Jamshedpur FC in their final league game in March. The Marina Machans then spent

three weeks training locally and played a friendly against East Bengal FC in Kolkata in the build-up to Super Cup. "We're under no illusions how diffi-

cult the game will be-Mumbai City are a wonderful side, with some outstanding players, both foreign and domestic," said Coyle during a pre-match press conference.

"We're looking forward to the game, we've shown that when we are at our very best, we can stand toe-to-toe with the best teams. The Super Cup is a great opportunity for everybody because there is an AFC spot available."

### Bangladesh fights back against Zimbabwe in test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Sylhet

ajmul Hossain Shanto hit 60 not out as Bangladesh fought back against Zimbabwe on a rain-truncated day three of the first cricket test. Shanto's knock, which included seven boundaries, helped Bangladesh reach 194-4 in its second innings with a 112-run overall lead before bad light forced an early

stumps Tuesday. Jaker Ali is 21 not out.

After the entire first session was washed out due to a wet outfield, Bangladesh resumed on 57-1 — still 25 behind Zimbabwe — and appeared to be in control thanks to Shanto, its captain, and Mominul Haque.

But Zimbabwe struck back with the wickets of Mominul, who made 47 after 56 runs in the first innings, and Mushfiqur Rahim. Shanto and Ali stabilized the innings and have shared a 39-run partner-

ship for the fifth wicket. Bangladesh was dismissed for 191 in its first innings and trailed by 82 runs after Zimbabwe replied with 273 all out.

Fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani ended the day with 3-51. He struck in the seventh over Tuesday, dismissing Mahmudul Hasan Joy for 33 after a short-pitched delivery.

Hasan, who survived twice because of poor fielding by Zimbabwe on Monday, added just five runs to his overnight total.

Pacer Victor Nyauchi (1-28) was rewarded for his excellent line and length by dismissing Mominul after forcing the batter to play and edge behind. Mominul

hit six fours in his 84 ball-47.

# England tour: Around six names in contention for two reserve middle-order slots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

would be up for grabs.

and Aston Villa.

**¬**he national selection committee is expected to name the India and India A squad for the Test tour of England in the second week of May and there will be at least six contenders for a couple of reserve middle-order slots that

During the tour of Australia, the BCCI sent a 17-member team but for the five Tests against England, the final squad could be 15 or 16 as the India A contingent's presence makes it easier to call up anyone if the situation warrants.

However, the national selection committee under Ajit Agarkar might need to do some brainstorming when it comes to selecting the fringe players, especially the reserve batters from the pool that comprises domestic performers, some tried and tested names and a couple of names who

If everyone is fit and fine, then skipper Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli select themselves. The all-rounder's slot belongs

are yet to realise their true potential.

to Nitish Kumar Reddy for the time being. There would be a slot for one extra middle-order batter if it is a squad of 15. A couple could be added if they beef it up to 16 for the assignment that will start June 20 and wind up only in the first week of

While no one would like to zero in on them right now, there are at least six names that are expected to be discussed as per PTI's understanding. One, if not two, can find their place in the senior team while the rest will certainly be a part of the India A series against England Lions which will be held at the same time.

#### **B Sai Sudharsan**

With seven tons in 29 first-class games, Sai Sudharsan is a player to watch out for even in red ball cricket. He has already been a big hit for Gujarat Titans in the IPL. The reason why selectors will have a closer look at the southpaw is his tight technique and he also did well for India A in Australia before getting injured.

His biggest strength is that he can open the batting and also bat in the middle-



a long-term prospect and at 23 and half

#### years, he is ready for the big league. **Shreyas Iyer**

Shreyas Iyer 2.0 is a player who cannot be ignored as he has come back to red ball cricket with a far more tighter technique

order as per the team's requirement. He is and plays the short ball way better than he did during his earlier stint.
On the England tour, experience will be

of premium and having played 14 Tests, including one in England in 2022, Iyer knows a thing or two about challenges. After being dropped from central contracts, he has played a lot of domestic crickanother shot at red ball is the question.

#### **Rajat Patidar**

If one goes purely by statistics, then Patidar has probably blown away his chance at Test cricket by not even getting a single fifty against Éngland at home. However, there are very few players outside the current India set-up who are as classy as the MP batter with strokes all

round the park. Add to it, his elegance which also at times can be his undoing. The Ranji season (less than 450 runs) didn't go as per plan but can Agarkar's committee show a leap of faith is the pertinent question.

#### **Karun Nair**

One of India's only two triple centurions in Test cricket, Karun Nair lost his way in the middle before finding his mojo for Vidarbha in what has been a dream domestic season with more than 850

first-class runs. He had once tweeted a couple of seasons ago "Dear cricket, give me one more

et and looked at ease. Whether he will get chance" and who knows the England tour could be that for him. In 2018, he didn't impress Ravi Shastri and Virat Kohli during net sessions and perhaps 2025 could be a different script for the Bengaluru man.

#### **Devdutt Padikkal:**

Another sinewy left-hander, who got a chance to make his Test debut in Australia due to the absence of Rohit Sharma in the first game. Padikkal did show glimpses of his talent in the second innings during an effective stand with Yashasvi Jaiswal. He has been in good touch in IPL and if he doesn't make the senior team cut, he will be in and around the India A team for sure.

#### **Sarfaraz Khan**

After he scored a 150 against New Zealand in 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.

# SRH desperately need win against Mumbai Indians

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Hyderabad

he misfiring Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) will hope for a happy homecoming when they take on a resurrected Mumbai Indians (MI) here on Wednesday, eyeing a muchneeded victory to revive their campaign in the Indian Premier League.

With only two wins in seven outings, SRH are in a desperate situation. Their power-packed batting has let them down more often than not while their bowlers are not making any strong impression either. That SRH are a one-dimensional side has been proven by the manner in which it has struggled on slow and turning pitches. The Pat Cummins-led outfit has lost two home matches too.

Their four-wicket defeat to MI in Mumbai on a tricky Wankhede pitch with grip and turn was the most recent instance of their frailties being exposed in challenging conditions. SRH batters thrive on flat wickets which produce high-scoring contests and having a favourable surface against MI would give the them the best chance to find some momentum.

Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head will have their task cut out against MI given SRH's chances of winning hinge, to a large extent, on the left-handed opening pair. Their success in the powerplay defines the team's fortunes in a contest.

Abhishek smacked a 55-ball 141 in his

last outing here against Punjab Kings to record the highest individual total for any batter in this IPL.

There will be, however, some concerns around Head who hasn't gone all guns blazing like he usually does and SRH will want their Australian star to be at the top of his game.

A defeat would put SRH in a tough situation. They will also have to be wary of their head-to-head record against Mumbai Indians. The team has won 10 out of their 24 matches while losing 14.

For Mumbai Indians, it is a perfect opportunity to test their resurgence in an away game before they return home to face Lucknow Super Giants in Mumbai on Sunday. Mumbai Indians have put their disappointing start to the IPL behind with three consecutive wins.

The five-time champions are coming off massive nine-wicket hammering of Chennai Super Kings on a batting-friendly wicket on which they went over the line hasing a target near 180 with more than four overs to spare. Rohit Sharma's sensational 76 not out and Suryakumar Yadav's 68 not out with all his trademark shots coming out fluently signalled the return to form of MI's two batting pillars.

Tilak Varma did not get to bat against CSK but the left-hander has been in prime form, while Naman Dhir has shown signs of hitting his strides as a finisher alongside skipper Hardik Pandya.



Jasprit Bumrah has not been at his menacing best when it comes to taking wickets but the ace India bowler has begun nailing his line and lengths perfectly.

This could be a warning sign for the SRH batters given MI tend to use Bumrah more strategically, with Trent Boult and Deepak Chahar sharing the new ball.

The nature of the surface could have a bearing on the outcome with SRH's two wins here coming on flat decks ensuring run-fests in their contests against Rajasthan Royals and Punjab Kings earlier.

#### **Teams**

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD: Pat Cummins (c), Ishan Kishan (wk), Atharva Taide, Abhinav Manohar, Aniket Verma, Sachin Baby, Smaran Ravichandran, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Travis Head, Harshal Patel, Kamindu Mendis, Wiaan Mulder, Abhishek Sharma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Mohammed Shami, Rahul Chahar, Simarjeet Singh, Zeeshan Ansari, Jaydev Unadkat, Eshan Malinga.

MUMBAI INDIANS: Hardik Pandya (c), Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Robin Minz, Ryan Rickelton (wk), Shrijith Krishnan (wk), Bevon Jacobs, Tilak Varma, Naman Dhir, Will Jacks, Mitchell Santner, Raj Angad Bawa, Vignesh Puthur, Corbin Bosch, Trent Boult, Karn Sharma, Deepak Chahar, Ashwani Kumar, Reece Topley, VS Penmetsa, Arjun Tendulkar, Mujeeb Ur

### KKR batters are low on confidence: Bravo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Kolkata

olkata Knight Riders (KKR) batsmen are "low on confidence" right now, the team's mentor Dwayne Bravo conceded after the franchise slumped to its fifth loss in eight IPL matches this season but refused to blame the much-talked about Eden Gardens pitch for the side's woes.

KKR were handed a 39-run loss by Gujarat Titans here on Monday with skipper Ajinkya Rahane's 36-ball 50 being the only knock of substance in the steep chase of 198 here.

"IPL is a tough tournament, and when you do not start well, you know, batsmen go into a period where they lose confidence," Bravo said at the post-match media interaction, summing up the mood

in the dressing room. 'That's what's happening at the moment. So like I said, we just have to keep backing them, and hopefully they come good. Our batters, low in confidence and nor-

mally runs bring confidence. "Form brings confidence. And we, at the moment, to be honest, don't have that con-

fidence," he explained. The Eden Gardens surface has been under the spotlight this season after the KKR camp voiced concerns about not getting its preferred home track. However, Bravo steered clear of blaming the pitch.

n't come here to talk about the wicket. I think both teams play on the same wicket. We did not play a good game of cricket. They played better than us," he

Last night's loss came close on the heels of an embarrassing collapse against Punjab Kings, where they were bundled out for 95 while chasing just 112. Bravo insisted that despite the horror run, the batsmen have been doing everything they can to regain rhythm in practice.

...They are not sitting back and missing practice. So as coaches, as a group, we cannot fault the effort. It's just not working out in the middle. But I have to just



keep backing the team and supporting the the game panned out, eventually, he guys." Asked about the big-hitting Andre Russell's continued struggles with the bat, Bravo was quick to dismiss the idea of teams targetting their star all-rounder in

"Russell is not the only one who is struggling at the moment. Russell is an experi-Actually as a team we're not batting properly. So that's just the reality.

...But as a group, we have to make sure that the players keep putting in their work and practice, keep preparing well, try to keep them mentally focused," he explained.

Rahane has done the heavy-lifting, and young Angkrish Raghuvanshi has impressed with his fluent strokeplay. KKR's decision to send the promising youngster as low as number nine as an impact sub raised several eyebrows in their match against GT.

Bravo, however, defended the move. "Well, we didn't start the game for him to bat at number nine. But the way how

ended up at number nine. So, you know, we tried to create that left-right combination," he reasoned.

"He's one of our better players. He's been doing very well for us throughout the season. But when you're chasing 200, you try to maximise as much as possible and try ly hit the ball in the middle."

Bravo however did admit that they were "caught up" with the left-right combination and Raghunvanshi ended up batting way down the order when the match had all but slipped out of their hands.

Bravo acknowledged that finishing has become a massive problem for KKR.

...There is a fine line between backing a player and trying to come up with the best combination that we can also try to make some changes, make some necessary adjustments to give the team that spot that

"It's something we have to discuss as a group, as a staff.

### Porel, Rahul guide DC to eight-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

elhi Capitals slowly but surely inched closer towards play-off qualification, annihilating Lucknow Super Giants by eight wickets in an IPL match here on Tuesday.

The win was powered by a near-perfect performance from their pace unit, aided by inexplicable tactics from rival captain Rishabh Pant.

The trio of Mukesh Kumar (4/33), Mitchell Starc (1/25) and Dushmantha Chameera (1/25 in 3 overs) used slower deliveries smartly as LSG could only manage a below-par 159/6 after being 87/1 at sealing their sixth win in eight games.

the halfway mark.

In the back-10, LSG could manage only 72 runs recording their lowest team total of the tournament so far.

It made matters only worse that Pant, with his bandaged right palm, came in at No. 7 and was dismissed for a two ball duck, while Abdul Samad wasted deliveries like a millionaire up the order.

The match as a contest was over at halftime only.

Young opener Abhishek Porel (51 off 36) set the tone before KL Rahul (57 not out off 42) and Axar Patel (34 not out off 20) saw DC home with 13 balls to spare,

With Sanjiv Goenka in the stands, it couldn't have been sweeter for Rahul, whose third fifty of the season, was a nice little statement with willow, having endured the LSG owner's public wrath during a game last season.

Pant's bowling changes were unimaginative and persisted with Ravi Bishnoi, who has become a one-trick pony with only googly as his wicket-taking delivery isn't helping his cause

A couple of more wins in the next six games will take DC to 16 points, considered magic figure for play-off qual-

### Kolkata Knight Riders struggling in IPL 2025: Morgan after loss to GT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kolkata

efending champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have strugfor the home game against Gujarat Titans no." tain Eoin Morgan.

KKR's loss to Gujarat Titans by 39 runs here on Monday was their second consecutive defeat in the tournament, third in the last five matches and overall fifth in eight games.

It has also been a season of struggle at home for the three-time champions who have also lost three of the four matches at the Eden Gardens.

"Kolkata Knight Riders has simply not bounced back as well as we would have liked them to. It's always a good sign for a strong team with a lot of character around, but they had the same failures that they've shown throughout the tournament," said JioStar expert Morgan.

"They made a couple of changes (against GT), mainly to try and gain some impetus in their batting line-up, and it gled with batting issues through-out this IPL season and the changes made didn't necessarily come off. Were the changes worth it? They'll sit back and say didn't necessarily come off. Were the

> They made a couple of changes (against GT), mainly to try and gain some impetus in their batting line-up, and it didn't necessarily come off - EOIN MORGAN, CRICKETER

Morgan said KKR failed to forge partnerships in chase of 199 as they finished at an ordinary 159 for eight.

"It was interesting to hear Ajinkya Rahane talk about 199 being a chaseable score because towards the back end of Gujarat Titans' innings, we thought the ball held up more than we expected (and) that made finding boundaries harder,"

Eoin Morgan said.

Morgan added, "But there was no rhythm, no substantial partnerships almost the polar opposite of what Gujarat Titans displayed. Morgan was all praise for India and GT

pacer Prasidh Krishna who delivered other vital spell of 4-0-25 "He's the purple cap holder at the

moment, and his rhythm just keeps getting better. We know he has that extra bit of pace to work with, but you have to admire the strength he brings during the middle phase of the game," he said.

"As a captain, having a seamer who can make that kind of impact in the middle overs is absolutely priceless.

"He now finds himself with the most wickets in this year's tournament — by some margin, actually, by four. It's great to see him growing as a player, evolving across formats, and now being rewarded with national honours as well," Morgan

### Jasprit Bumrah, Mandhana honoured in Wisden

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

ndia's premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah was on Tuesday named as Leading Men's Cricketer in the World while prolific batter Smriti Mandhana grabbed the honour in the women's category in the 2025 edition of Wisden Cricketers'

The two Indian players were honoured for their stand-out performances last year.

The 31-year-old Bumrah picked up 71 Test wickets in season 2024 at an average of 14.92, the most by any bowler with such an economy in a single year. He became the first Test bowler in history to claim 200 wickets at an average of less than 20.

In the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia, Bumrah almost single-handedly carried India's attack with 32 wickets at an average of 13.06.

At the T20 World Cup, he was named Player of the Tournament for his 15 wickets at an economy rate of just 4.17, leading India to their first ICC trophy since

Women's team senior batter Smriti Mandhana made it an India double as she was named as Wisden's Leading Women's Cricketer in the World.

The 28-year-old Mandhana scored 1659



runs across formats in 2024 — the most by a woman cricketer in a calendar year of international cricket — including four ODI hundreds, which was another record.

She capped her efforts with a second Test century — 149 — in a 10-wicket win

Mandhana became the first Indian woman since the inception of the award to earn the title twice. She had already earned the coveted honour in 2018 also.

West Indian Nicholas Pooran was named as the Leading T20 Player in the

### Novak Djokovic returns to Madrid Open

¬ormer champion Novak Djokovic has returned to the Madrid Open for the first time in three years in hopes of achieving his 100th tour-level title. Djokovic is seeded fourth in the same half of the draw as second-seeded Carlos Alcaraz, the home favorite who arrives at the Caja Magica this week with fitness concerns after reaching consecutive clay-court finals.

The 37-year-old Djokovic, a threetime champion in Madrid, hasn't played in the Spanish capital since losing to Alcaraz in the 2022 semifinals, their first meeting. Djokovic won his 99th title last August at the Paris Olympics. He has lost four finals since then, most recently last month in Miami.

The 100-title club features only Jimmy Connors (109) and Roger Federer (103). Over the last two weekends, Alcaraz has won the Monte Carlo Masters and lost in the Barcelona Open final, where he needed treatment on his upper right

leg on Sunday.

"I'm confident it won't affect me in Madrid," he said. "That's what happens when you play so many matches and have so few days to rest. İt's so demanding, and you have

to give 100 per cent every day. Having

played a tournament like Monte Carlo



and arriving in Barcelona with few days to adapt is really tough."

Alcaraz said fellow Spaniard Rafael Nadal, a five-time winner in Madrid, wrote to him after the Barcelona final to encourage him and say he hoped he wasn't injured.

"I bow at the feet of Rafa because of what he did week after week," Alcaraz said. "You have to respect that."

Alexander Zverev, No. 2 in the world after winning in Munich at the weekend, was the top seed in Madrid and Taylor Fritz was the third seed. Defending champion Andrey Rublev was the seventh seed. Djokovic has a 30-9 record in Madrid, with titles in 2011, 2016 and 2019. He beat his coach Andy Murray in the 2016 final. Alcaraz won Madrid in 2022 and 2023.

Sabalenka leads women's draw

The women's draw has 29 of the top 30 players. Number 15 Barbora Krejcikova is missing because of an injury.

Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka seeks

her fourth final appearance in Madrid in five years. She won the tournament in 2021 and 2023, and lost last year's final to Iga Swiatek, the second seed this week.

### **Michael Slater** gets jail term for domestic violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Sydney ustralian cricketer-turned-commentator Michael Slater was on

Tuesday sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to multiple charges, including domestic violence, but will be allowed to walk free immediately after having served over a year in custody.

According to a report in ABC Sport, his sentence was "partly suspended" due to the time served. The 55-year-old was charged with more than a dozen offences including domestic violence, unlawful stalking or intimidation, breaking into a dwelling with intent at night, common assault, assault occasioning bodily harm and choking or suffocation.

The prosecution told the Maroochydore District Court, that alcohol "was a repeating feature with his offending as his behaviour becomes more erratic.

"The court heard Slater made threats of self-harm as he warned the victim not to report harassment and she felt extremely fearful and exhausted by Slater's behaviour,"

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