

INDIA is INDUS: PAKISTAN, the Water and Blood is Ours

MOHIT KANDHARI/RAHUL DATTA ■ Jammu/New Delhi

Following India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, the political leadership in Pakistan is running high and dry, staring at a bleak future ahead. For the first time, India has decided to hit Pakistan where it hurts the most, agriculture, food, water and energy security.

Sources in New Delhi said the Centre is planning to undertake a study to look into ways to maximise the use of the quantum of water from the three rivers that Pakistan had earlier used under the Indus Water Treaty, now that the agreement has been suspended.

The proposal was made at a high-level meeting on Saturday chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah that discussed the future course of action on the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, which has been kept in abeyance following the Pahalgalam terror attack. With the treaty now put in abeyance, the government is looking at

ways to utilise the water of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab.

After Friday's high-level meeting, Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil asserted that the government is working on a strategy to ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan.

"We will ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan from India," the Jal Shakti Minister had said after the meeting. According to an official, the Ministry has been asked to conduct a study to look at ways to utilise the water from the three western rivers.

In response to India's decision on the water-sharing agreement, Pakistan's Senate, in a resolution, has said the move amounted to "an act of war".

Coupled with this, the heightened tension along the line of control has also rattled Pakistan's military leadership, especially after Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India will wipe out the remaining land of terror and will identify, track and punish every terrorist and their backers who were responsible for the attack

in Pahalgalam "beyond their imagination".

Virtually bending on their knees, Pakistan on Saturday offered to join any "neutral and transparent" probe into the Pahalgalam terrorist attack that killed 26 people.

After Friday's high-level meeting, Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil asserted that the government is working on a strategy to ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan — CR PAATIL, JAL SHAKTI MINISTER

The horrific terror attack, one of the most provocative since the scrapping of Article 370 in 2019, has triggered a strong backlash from the government against Pakistan, which New Delhi accuses of harbouring and supporting cross-border terrorism.

Addressing a graduation ceremony at the Pakistan Military Academy in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Kakul, Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that his country is open to taking part in a "credible" investigation.

"The recent tragedy in Pahalgalam is yet another example of this perpetual blame game, which must come to a grinding halt. As a responsible country, Pakistan is open to participating in any neutral, transparent and credible investigation," Shehbaz Sharif said.

However, referring to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty by India, Sharif said any attempt to stop, reduce or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan would be responded to with full force and might. Sharif threatened to use all options if the water of its share was stopped by India. "Water is our lifeline and a vital national interest, and its availability will be safeguarded at all costs and under all circumstances," he said.

If India cuts off or significantly reduces flows from the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab, the impact will be immediate and severe on Pakistan's economy.

To begin with, food production could

collapse, threatening food security for millions. Urban water supplies would dry up, causing unrest in cities. Lastly, Power generation would stall, crippling industries and homes. Joining the chorus, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari also threatened that blood would flow in rivers if water is stopped, in a sharp response to India's decision to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) after the Pahalgalam terror attack.

Hitting out, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri Saturday issued a sharp response to Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's recent remarks on India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) following the Pahalgalam terror attack on Tuesday.

Puri's comments come in the wake of Bhutto-Zardari's inflammatory speech at a public rally in Sukkur, Sindh province. Addressing supporters, the PPP chairman had said, "The Indus is ours and will remain ours — either our water will flow through it, or their blood."

Responding to Bhutto-Zardari's state-

ment, Puri remarked, "I heard his statement. Tell him to jump somewhere in the water. Well, how will he when there will be no water? Do not dignify such statements. They will get to understand that."

In Ramban, J & K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also came out to strongly rebuke Pakistan Premier Shehbaz Sharif's offer for a "neutral" probe into the Pahalgalam terror attack, while pointing out clearly that Islamabad had initially denied the incident and accused New Delhi of "staging" it.

"First of all, they did not even recognise that something had happened in Pahalgalam. First, they said that India was behind it. For the people who made allegations against us in the first place, it is difficult to say anything about it now. I don't want to give much importance to their statements," Abdullah told reporters in Ramban. Abdullah's reaction came after the Pakistani Prime Minister, rattled by the increasing tensions with India, said he was ready for a "neutral and transparent investigation" into the terror attack that left 26 tourists dead on April 22.

DGCA issue detailed advisory after Pakistan closes airspace

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Amid longer flight durations triggered by Pakistan's airspace closure, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Saturday issued a detailed advisory directing airlines to take better care of passengers as international flights are now taking longer and inform passengers at check-in time about rerouting, longer flying time and the possibility of an enroute halt for refuelling the aircraft and crew change.

"Passengers will generally remain onboard such stops," says the advisory issued by DGCA CFO Captain Shweta Singh. "Airlines must ensure that catering uplift is revised based on actual travel time (including technical halt). This includes: adequate meals and beverages for the full duration, additional hydration and dry snacks and special meals as per requests." Pakistan has shut its airspace for Indian

airlines. Because of this, many international flights, especially those leaving from north Indian cities like Delhi, are being forced to take longer routes. This is causing delays and longer flying hours.

Airlines must ensure that catering uplift is revised based on actual travel time (including technical halt), this includes—adequate meals and beverages for the full duration

The advisory focuses on five main areas — pre-flight passenger communication, in-flight catering and comfort, medical preparedness and alternate aerodromes, customer service and support readiness, and intra-departmental coordination. DGCA said that due to recent developments involving international airspace clo-

sures and overflight restrictions, airline operations have been impacted. There are significant rerouting of international and regional flights, increased block times compared to scheduled durations, and possibility of technical halts enroute for operational or fuel requirements. Generally, block time refers to the duration of a flight from the origin to the destination. It is estimated that over 800 flights a week are likely to be impacted by longer flight times, increased fuel burn, and a few other complexities related to crew and flight scheduling, all of which would increase operational costs.

According to data from Cirium, an aviation analytics company, currently there are almost 400 weekly westward international departures from North Indian airports—Delhi, Amritsar, Jaipur and Lucknow—that were routinely flying over Pakistan. Given that all these flights have return legs, the total num-

ber of affected flights goes up to around 800 from these airports. Of these, around 640 flights are from or to India's largest airport — Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport — which is likely to be the most affected due to the move by Pakistan. The initial impact is already visible with Indian airlines' flights from North India to West Asia, the Caucasus, Europe, the UK, and North America's eastern region switching from their routine paths to longer routes, adding anywhere between 15 minutes to a few hours to the journey, depending on the distance and the location of the destination.

In the pre flight passenger communication, the DGCA stated the airlines must inform passengers about routing changes due to airspace restrictions. "Communicate the revised total expected travel time (departure to arrival).

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Tensions escalate along LoC

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

The Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan is once again heating up in the aftermath of the Pahalgalam massacre, in which 26 tourists were killed and 17 others were wounded on April 22. Shattering peace, the Pakistan Army has been violating the February 2021 ceasefire agreement for the last two days by resorting to small arms firing across multiple locations along the LoC. The Indian Army has also given them a befitting reply.

Meanwhile, anticipating punitive strikes by India, Pakistan has already issued a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen/Mariners) for the Arabian Sea and initiated a naval live fire exercise, while putting its military on full alert. The local commanders of the Indian Army have been constantly monitoring the ground situation. High alert has been

sounded to prevent any 'lethal' strike by the Border Action Team (BAT) of the Pakistan Army on the forward Indian posts.

"On the night of 25-26 of April, 2025, unprovoked small firing was carried out by multiple Pakistan Army posts all across the Line of Control in Kashmir. Indian troops responded appropriately with small arms. No casualties reported," a statement of the Indian Army said.

On February 21, 2025, the Indian army lodged a strong protest with Pakistan over recent incidents of cross-LoC firing at a Brigade Commander level Flag meeting that took place along the line of control near the Chakan-Da-Bagh crossing point in Poonch. After the ceasefire agreement of 2021, tensions escalated between India and Pakistan on several occasions as targeted strikes on the Indian army convoys, army camps were reported across Jammu and Kashmir.

PIONEER IN SHORT

Indian, Pakistani protesters face off in London

London: There was a face-off between Indian diaspora groups who gathered to protest Pakistan-backed terrorism in the wake of the Pahalgalam terrorist attack and counter-protesters outside the Pakistan High Commission here, which saw scenes of a Pakistani diplomatic official making threatening gestures. In videos posted by Indian community groups from Friday evening's protest on social media, the Pakistani official can be seen taunting them from the balcony of the mission building at Lowndes Square. He was holding a poster with a sketch of Captain Abhinandan Varthaman and the words "Chai is Fantastic" — a reference to the Indian Air Force (IAF) pilot's captivity in February 2019.

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to resume from June

New Delhi: India and China will, after a gap of five years, resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra from June. This move is seen as an attempt to normalise the ties between the two countries that nosedived following the standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday said the Yatra is set to take place from June to August via two routes — Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La in Sikkim. The pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake in China's Tibet Autonomous Region holds religious significance to Hindus as well as Jains and Buddhists. "Kailash Mansarovar Yatra organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is set to take place during June to August 2025," it said. The Yatra was suspended initially in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently because of the military standoff between the two sides on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

ISRO flags off second stage of GSVL launch vehicle

Bengaluru: ISRO on Saturday announced that the second stage of its GSVL launch vehicle was flagged off by Chairman V Narayanan recently from the ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri, to the launch complex at Sriharikota. The Directors of ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) and Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) also participated in the flag off ceremony which was held on March 24, it said. "This liquid stage is earmarked for the upcoming mission of GSVL (GSLV-F16) that will launch the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite. The launch campaign activities for this mission have already commenced at Sriharikota in the first week of April 2025," ISRO said, in a statement.

India lifted 171 million people from extreme poverty: World Bank

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New York

India has lifted 171 million people from extreme poverty in the decade between 2011-12 and 2022-23, the World Bank said. "Over the past decade, India has significantly reduced poverty. Extreme poverty (living on less than \$ 2.15 per day) fell from 16.2 per cent in 2011-12 to 2.3 per cent in 2022-23, lifting 171 million people above this line," the World Bank said in its 'Poverty & Equity Brief' on India.

It added that rural extreme poverty dropped from 18.4 per cent to 2.8 per cent, and urban from 10.7 per cent to 1.1 per cent, narrowing the rural-urban gap from 7.7 to 1.7 percentage points — a 16 per cent annual decline. The brief said that India also transitioned into the lower-middle-income category. Using the \$3.65 per day LMIC poverty line, poverty fell from 61.8 per cent to 28.1 per cent, lifting 378 million people out of poverty.

Rural poverty dropped from 69 per cent to 32.5 per cent, and urban poverty from 43.5 per cent to 17.2 per cent, reducing the rural-urban gap from 25 to 15 percentage points with a 7 per cent annual decline. India's five most populous states — Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh—accounted for 65 per cent of the country's extreme poor in 2011-12 and contributed to two-thirds

of the overall decline in extreme poverty by 2022-23, it said. "Nevertheless, these states still accounted for 54 per cent of India's extremely poor (2022-23) and 51 per cent of the multidimensionally poor (2019-21)," the brief said adding that as measured by the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), non-monetary poverty declined from 53.8 per cent in 2005-06 to 16.4 per cent by 2019-21.

The brief added that employment growth has outpaced the working-age population since 2021-22. Employment rates, especially among women, are rising, and urban unemployment fell to 6.6 per cent in Q1 FY24/25, the lowest since 2017-18. Recent data indicates a shift of male workers from rural to urban areas for the first time since 2018-19, while rural female employment in agriculture has grown.

Highlighting the challenges that persist, the brief said that youth unemployment is 13.3 per cent, increasing to 29 per cent among tertiary education graduates. Only 23 per cent of non-formal jobs are formal, and most agricultural employment remains informal. Self-employment is rising, especially among rural workers and women. Despite female employment rate of 31 per cent, gender disparities remain, with 234 million more men in paid work.

The World Bank Poverty and Equity Briefs (PEBs) highlight poverty, shared prosperity and inequality trends for over 100 developing countries.

Government cancels Junior Engineer leaves

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Cracking the whip, the Delhi Government has cancelled all leaves for officers at the Junior Engineer (JE) level and above in the Delhi Jal Board, Public Works Department (PWD) and Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) departments until 15th September 2025 to complete the desilting of drains and take necessary measures to prevent waterlogging before the upcoming monsoon. Leave will be allowed only for serious medical emergencies with senior approval.

The issue has become a recurring feature during monsoons due to multiple factors, including old drains and silt accumulation. Delhi gets inundated every monsoon with waterlogging and flooding due to incomplete desilting work and poor drainage management system on the ground. Last year, on the first day of monsoon, roads of most parts of South Delhi — AIIMS, Airport road, Dhaula Kuan, Jangpura, Lajpat Nagar, ITO — saw heavy waterlogging leading to traffic snarls. Last year, three students in Old Rajinder Nagar after they were trapped in a flooded basement of a coaching centre. In 2023, the Ring Road, ISBT Kashmere Gate, ITO, IP Road, Pragati Maidan Tunnel falling near Yamuna River inundated for three days, disrupting vehicular movement.

"It is hereby ordered that leave of any kind will not be approved or recommended at any level of JE and above till 15th

September, 2025 except in case of extreme medical emergency of the officer or immediate family members. Leave under exceptional circumstances will only be approved at the level of Principal Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary," reads the order issued by Naveen Kumar Chaudhary Additional Chief Secretary, from the General Administration Department of Delhi government.

It is hereby ordered that leave of any kind will not be approved at any level of JE and above till 15th September, 2025 except in case of extreme medical emergency of the officer

"Every year due to severe problems of waterlogging, bad road conditions and flooding across the city during monsoon, people suffer a lot. As the monsoon is approaching fast, work has to be carried out on war footing by way of completion of desilting of drains, necessary measures to prevent waterlogging and flooding, repairs of roads and removal of unwanted materials on roads and drains across the city. Even during monsoon, all the concerned departments have to be on alert mode to meet any emerging challenge," said the order. Recently at a review meeting, the Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was informed that in 2023 and 2024, Delhi Traffic Police

has identified 335 waterlogging sites under PWD in Delhi, out of which work has been completed at 284 sites, while instructions have been given to complete the work at the remaining places expeditiously.

Of the 335 waterlogging points under PWD, 232 short-term solutions and 52 long-term projects have already been completed. Work is ongoing at the remaining 51 points, which are being addressed on a priority basis.

Under this, Junior Engineers and Assistant Engineers have been assigned responsibilities as designated officers at the field level, while Executive Engineers have been appointed as reviewing officers to monitor these works. All nodal officers have been told to submit their detailed action plans within a week. The 7 most critical waterlogging points will be directly monitored by the Principal Secretary and Engineer-in-Chief, PWD, ensuring robust oversight and accountability.

Under this, work is being carried out to strengthen 101 roads under PWD, which have been directed to be completed before the monsoon. Additionally, repair work for potholes on the capital's roads is also being completed on a priority basis.

Water and PWD Minister Parvesh Verma has said that all the 1,400 km of drains under the Public Works Department are to be desilted by May 31, and other agencies are also working to clean the drains under their jurisdiction.

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Massive explosion at Iranian port kills five, injures over 700

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Muscat (Oman)

A massive explosion and fire rocked a port on Saturday in Southern Iran purportedly linked to a shipment of a chemical ingredient used to make missile propellant, killing five people and injuring more than 700 others.

The blast at the Shahid Rajaei port happened as Iran and the United States met on Saturday in Oman for the third round of negotiations over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear programme.

While no one in Iran outright suggested that the explosion came from an attack, even Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who is leading the talks, on Wednesday acknowledged that "our security services are on high alert given past instances of attempted sabotage and assassination operations designed to provoke a legitimate response."

For hours, authorities in Iran offered no clear explanation for what caused the blast at the port, which is just outside of Bandar Abbas, though they did deny that the explosion had anything to do with the country's oil industry.

However, the port took in a shipment of "sodium perchlorate rocket fuel" in March, the private security firm Ambrey said. The fuel is part of a shipment from China by two vessels to Iran first report-

ed in January by the Financial Times.

The fuel was going to be used to replenish Iran's missile stocks, which had been depleted by its direct attacks on Israel during the war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. "The fire was reportedly the result of improper handling of a shipment of solid fuel intended for use in Iranian ballistic missiles," Ambrey said.

Ship-tracking data analysed by The Associated Press put one of the vessels believed to be carrying the chemical in the vicinity in March, as Ambrey said. Iran hasn't acknowledged taking the shipment. The Iranian mission to the United Nations didn't immediately respond to a request for comment on Saturday.

It's unclear why Iran wouldn't have moved the chemicals from the port, particularly after the Beirut port blast in 2020. That explosion, caused by the ignition of hundreds of tonnes of highly explosive ammonium nitrate, killed more than 200 people and injured more than 6,000 others. However, Israel did target Iranian missile sites where Tehran uses industrial mixers to create solid fuel.

Social media footage of the explosion on Saturday at Shahid Rajaei saw reddish-dusted smoke rising from the fire just before the detonation. That suggests a chemical compound being involved in the blast.

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President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday attended the funeral Mass of Pope Francis at St Peter's Square here. Francis, who was the first non-European Pope in nearly 1,300 years, died on Monday. He was 88. Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijju, Minister of State for Minority Affairs, George Kurian and Deputy Speaker of Goa Legislative Assembly, Joshua De Souza, who are part of the official Indian delegation led by the President, also attended the ceremony. "President Droupadi Murmu attended the funeral Mass of His Holiness Pope Francis at Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City," her office said in a post on X. Murmu reached here on Friday on a two-day visit to offer condolences on behalf of the government and people of India. Soon after, she paid homage to Pope Francis at the Basilica of St Peter. India had declared a three-day state mourning on the passing of Pope Francis. World leaders and a large number of Catholic followers attended Pope Francis' funeral on Saturday.

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Woman duped of ₹6.39 lakh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Cyber thugs duped a woman of Rs 6.39 lakh by luring her to earn huge profits by making investments in furniture trading. The woman alleged that the cyber thugs added her to a Telegram group and then duped her. The cyber police have registered an FIR and are investigating the case. The woman, identified as Aishwarya Lata of Malhaur in Chinhat, was added to a Telegram group by someone on April 16. Soon after this, she started receiving messages and calls from a mobile number with different callers telling her to earn a lot of money in furniture trading. The woman fell into their trap and deposited money

in the account mentioned by one of the callers and earned Rs 13,000 as profit which was credited in her bank account. The victim told the police that after getting the profit, she trusted the cyber fraudsters and gave them Rs 6.39 lakh from her and her husband's bank accounts in several installments. When she tried to withdraw the money, the cyber thugs started demanding more money in the name of several taxes including goods and services tax and blocked her mobile phone number. According to Cyber Police Station incharge Brajesh Yadav, an FIR has been registered and efforts are being made to gather information about the cyber thugs on the basis of mobile phone and bank account number.

CM to inspect Ganga Expressway today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will inspect the construction work of the Ganga Expressway on Sunday. One of the largest and most ambitious infrastructure projects in Uttar Pradesh's history, the Ganga Expressway is a key priority for the state government. Originally scheduled for April 28, the inspection has been advanced by a day. During his visit, the chief minister will review on-ground progress across three key districts — Hardoi, Shahjahanpur and Hapur. The Yogi government remains firmly committed to transforming Uttar Pradesh into a leading state in infrastructure,

investment and employment. CM Yogi Adityanath has placed special emphasis on the Ganga Expressway project, pushing for its timely completion to maximise public benefit and drive regional development. On Sunday Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will inspect the under-construction Ganga Expressway. His tour will begin at chainage 62+200 in Alamnagar Bangar village (Garhmukteshwar tehsil, Hapur district) under the Meerut-Budaun section. He will then visit chainage 242+650 at Peeru village (Jalalabad tehsil, Shahjahanpur district) in the Budaun-Hardoi section, followed by chainage 347+000 at Hasanpur Gopal village (Bilgram tehsil, Hardoi district) in the

Hardoi-Unnao section. As per the instructions of Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh, the progress report of the Ganga Expressway at each site will be presented to the chief minister with the support of the respective district administrations. The Ganga Expressway, being constructed by the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA), will connect the western and eastern parts of the state, stretching approximately 600 kilometres from Meerut to Prayagraj. This expressway will not only boost industrial and economic development in the state but will also integrate small towns

and rural areas into the mainstream. It is expected to generate new opportunities in agriculture, trade, tourism, and investment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone for this expressway on December 18, 2021, in Shahjahanpur. The project is expected to be completed soon. The Ganga Expressway is considered a major contributor to the PM Gati Shakti initiative, which aims to propel India towards becoming a \$5 trillion economy. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is personally overseeing the project to ensure that the construction is completed with highest quality standards and within the stipulated time frame.

Taneja assumes office as V-C of Chisti University

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Prof Ajay Taneja formally assumed office on Saturday as the new Vice-Chancellor of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Language University (KMCLU). Outgoing Vice-Chancellor Prof JP Pandey officially handed over the responsibilities to Prof. Taneja. He becomes the sixth permanent vice-chancellor of the university. An eminent academician in the fields of chemistry, environmental chemistry and atmospheric science, Prof Taneja brings with him over three decades of teaching experience and more than 32 years of research expertise. In addition to his academic accomplishments, he has held several key administrative positions throughout his career. In his inaugural address, Prof Taneja outlined his vision for the university's growth, centred on three foundational pillars — innovation, research and excellence. He emphasised on promoting new ideas and technological experimentation through innovation and highlighted the importance of fostering knowledge creation and encouraging pioneering research. He emphasised his commitment to establishing excellence in education, research and holistic development across all university activities. Prof. Taneja interacted with faculty deans, department heads and senior university officials at a meeting held in the university auditorium. He reviewed the university's ongoing activities and assessed preparations for the upcoming admission process. He reaffirmed his dedication to ensuring all-round development of students and expressed his resolve to elevate the university to greater heights. Prof Taneja also underlined his commitment to aligning the university's academic framework with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Mastermind of gang which duped businessman of Rs 4 cr arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

The Special Task Force, on Friday, arrested the mastermind of a gang that duped a businessman of Rs 4 crore by assuring to get a Food Corporation of India tender allotted to him. The accused, identified as Arvind Chauhan alias Sagar Khandelwal alias Nazahir Hussain of East Kailash in South Delhi, is a native of Bareilly. He was arrested by the STF from behind a school at around 8:30 pm on Friday on a tip-off from an informer. The police recovered two mobile phones, a wrist watch, Rs 1,500 in cash, a forged Aadhaar card and identity card of FCI in his name, a huge number of documents and 96 tender papers from the accused. The accused was arrested after an investigation on a complaint against him corroborated his crime. According to the STF, one Syed Rafat Muin of Viram Khand in Gomti Nagar here, had accused Arvind Chauhan, whose real name is Nazahir Hussain, of duping him of Rs 4 crore by assuring him to get an FCI tender for rice supply worth Rs 140 crore allotted in his name.

A police spokesman said Arvind was to meet a person to whom he had promised to get an FCI tender allotted in his name and the STF got a whiff of this meeting and nabbed him. During interrogation, Arvind Chauhan told the police that his real name was Nazahir Hussain and he was a native of Bareilly. An intermediate pass Arvind aka Nazahir revealed that he had organised a gang of thugs which trapped people trying to get tender in the FCI. He admitted that he had duped Syed Rafat Muin of Rs 4 crore. Arvind aka Nazahir disclosed that Muin had to deposit Rs 14 crore as earnest money for a Rs 140-crore tender in the FCI. The accused asked Muin to give him Rs 5 crore as favour money to get the EMD waived and the tender allotted to him. Later the accused and his aides took Rs 4 crore from the victim and gave a forged tender allotment letter to Muin and exerted pressure on him to give the remaining Rs 1 crore. The fraud was exposed when Muin got the documents cross-checked and found them to be forged. He then filed a complaint with the police.

Arvind aka Nazahir disclosed the names of his aides also.

FAKE MESSAGES TO JALKAL CONSUMERS

Meanwhile, cases of cyber thugs duping city residents in the name of water supply bills have come to the fore. Some consumers received fake messages on their WhatsApp accounts, warning them of disconnection of water supply. They complained to the Jalkal department, which in turn informed the police about the fake messages. The Jal Sansthan clarified in the letter to the police that no such messages were being sent to any consumer by it. "The department never sends a notice to disconnect the water supply connection on WhatsApp. Do not trust any such suspicious message or call and do not share payment or personal information. Consumers should contact the Jalkal department only through authorised means and get information about the bill or connection only from the official website or office of the department," a police official said.

4 hurt in drive against encroachment at KGMU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Two professors and two resident doctors were injured in an anti-encroachment drive at the King George's Medical University on Saturday. As per the KGMU officials, the university had served four notices on the encroachers around the Shamina Shah mazar to vacate the area. On Saturday, a team of KGMU had gone there to tell the encroachers that the time period given in the notice had elapsed and that they should vacate the property. However, the team, that included the proctor, was gheraoed and attacked by the encroachers with stones. As the team members raised an alarm, other resident doctors rushed to the spot in large numbers. In the ensuing melee, two professors and two resident doctors were injured. A police force also arrived at the spot and controlled the situation. KGMU spokesperson KK Singh said that a committee had been formed by Vice-Chancellor Sonia Nityanand, which served legal notices on the encroachers. He said that the former district magistrate of Lucknow and the deputy commissioner of police had also inspected the encroachments and said that they should be removed. Singh said that the KGMU administration had started the process of removing encroachments in the area behind the eye department. "The university administration has clarified that only the encroached land is being vacated, as it is the property of KGMU. The administration has assured that the mazar (Shamina Shah) situated behind the Eye department will be allowed to remain in its original state and no action of any kind will be taken against it," he said.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I hitherto known as haji Mohammad Siddique S/o Mohammad Zubair R/o 101/61 C-1 Colonelganj, Kanpur UP-208001. Have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Mohammad Siddique. It is certified that I have complied with other legal Requirements in this connection.

NOTICE

I KHUSHBOO RAKHI aged about 40 years, wife of deepak kumar mishra, resident of 645A/318 jankivihar jankipuram lucknow deponent do hereby declare that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my elder daughter namely Vyaana Mishra's 10th class marksheet as Khushboo Mishra instead of Khushboo Rakhi .

NOTICE

In my high school marksheet and certificate, my father's name has been incorrectly mentioned as Furqan Syed Mohammad. However, the correct and true name is Syed Mohammad Furqan, Syed Mohammad Gufran, L-55, KDA Colony, Ganga Vihar, Jajmau, Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Bullan To Batulan Bitola for all future purposes, Batulan Bitola W/o Sabir Ali R/o 133- D, Sujatganj, Kanpur

AUCTION NOTICE

दिनांक 28-04-2025 अपराह्न 12:00 बजे उज्जैन कोआपरेटिव बैंक लि., शाखा - निराला नगर, लखनऊ में निम्नरोच्य एवं अनुपयुक्त घोषित सामग्रियों की नीलामी जहाँ है-जैसा है आधार पर होगी, सिक्कीरिटी रु० 5,000/- नकद जी. एस. टी. पंजीकरण के साथ जमा होगी। आई. पी. सिंह एण्ड सन्स।

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Aafreen to Aafreen Jahan for all future purposes, Aafreen Jahan W/o Syed Mohammad Furqan R/o L-55, KDA Colony, Ganga Vihar, Jajmau Kanpur Nagar

NOTICE

My daughter's name is registered as kashish in educational records which is correct whereas in adhar card Ayushi is written which is wrong. She be known and recognised by kashish name. Awadhesh Kumar s/o Ayodhya Prasad Gram kakrahi post chilaula lalganj raebareli

NOTICE

I, PARAMAR ROHIT KUMAR is Son of Name PARAMAR JAYANTILAL PARSOTAM, presently residing at ,Vill/ Po- Haripar, Teh- Dhurangadhra, Dist - Surendra Nagar, State- Gujarat ,Pin- 363310, have changed my name from PARAMAR ROHIT KUMAR to ROHIT PARAMAR, vide affidavit no IN-UP09868775700160X, dated 26/04/25, before notary, JHANSI.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sunita Devi W/o JC681880W Sub Godendra Pal Singh, R/o Vill.-Koriha, Post -Semar Paha ,Tahasil- Lalganj, Raebareli, U.P. Do hereby declare that my name wrongly written in my husband army record's as Sunitha Devi shall henceforth be known as Sunitha Devi vide affidavit no. IN KA79270334819263W dated 8th April, 2024 the Id before judicial magistrate 1st class, at Bengaluru ,Karnataka. Both are same and one identical person.

NOTICE

I, PARMAR DEEPAK KUMAR JAYANTILAL is Son of Name PARAMAR JAYANTILAL PARSOTAM, presently residing at ,Vill/ Po- Haripar, Teh- Dhurangadhra, Dist - Surendra Nagar, State- Gujarat ,Pin- 363310, have changed my name from PARMAR DEEPAK KUMAR JAYANTILAL to DEEPAK PARMAR, vide affidavit no IN-UP09861383793798X, dated 26/04/25, before notary Jhansi



BJP MP Hema Malini called on Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow on Saturday.

Delegation of IFS officers focuses on promoting tourism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

As part of an ongoing effort to promote tourism, a delegation of 10 Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers of the 2009 batch visited the Directorate of Tourism, Government of Uttar Pradesh in Lucknow. The visit served as a platform for knowledge exchange and strategic dialogue focused on enhancing tourism and further embedding the principles of sustainable and responsible tourism into the state's tourism framework. The officers were welcomed at the Directorate, where a comprehensive presentation was delivered by Director, Tourism, Prakar Mishra and Managing Director, UP State Tourism Development Corporation (UPSTDC) Sanya Chabra. The presentation offered a detailed overview of Uttar Pradesh's rich and diverse tourism ecosystem and policies, with its 12 mega tourism circuits, particularly eco-tourism destinations that present a huge scope. The visiting IFS officers were also formally felicitated by the Directorate of Tourism in appreciation of their service and valuable engagement during the visit. "The officers were apprised of the ongoing initiatives, developments, policies and available facilities at various destinations across the state. Special

emphasis was laid on informing them about the tourism opportunities and support infrastructure so that they can leverage this knowledge in their respective postings to popularise these destinations and promote inbound tourism to Uttar Pradesh. Discussions also highlighted the pivotal role of tourism in promoting livelihoods and attracting eco-conscious travellers," said a tourism official. Following the presentation, an in-depth discussion ensued on the potential for integrated planning and inter-departmental coordination to enhance the appeal, accessibility and sustainability of the state's tourism offerings. The IFS officers, presently posted in various countries, shared field-level insights and suggested innovative approaches to strengthen visitor engagement while ensuring ecological integrity. A key suggestion from the officers was the promotion of Uttar Pradesh's tourism sites on global platforms, with an emphasis on targeted outreach strategies. These included the identification of suitable travel influencers, bloggers, vloggers and media professionals, and organising Familiarisation (FAM) trips for them to experience and promote the state's natural heritage overseas through compelling storytelling and digital engagement.

ADA to construct floating bathing kund in Ayodhya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Ayodhya

In a move aimed at improving facilities for tourists and devotees in Ayodhya, the Uttar Pradesh government has decided to construct a floating bathing kund in the Saryu river. The modern kund will accommodate up to 300 devotees at a time, providing a safe and convenient bathing experience, especially during large fairs and religious gatherings. With the completion of the grand Ram temple, Ayodhya has been witnessing an unprecedented surge in the number of visitors. To further enhance the city's religious and tourism appeal, the Uttar Pradesh gov-

ernment is undertaking a series of development projects. As part of these efforts, the Ayodhya Development Authority has approved the construction of the floating kund, which will offer a unique and modern experience to devotees and tourists alike. The initiative is expected not only to boost religious tourism but also to strengthen the local economy. The floating bathing kund will be equipped with safety barriers, railings, changing rooms, benches, solar lighting, an emergency support boat, shopping facilities and other modern amenities. This will not only be important from a religious point of view, but will also play an important role in promoting tourism.

COOPERATIVE TRIBUNAL VK Singh named chairman, Achhelal Singh member

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government has filled the vacant positions in the Uttar Pradesh Cooperative Tribunal with key appointments. Retired district official Vinod Kumar Singh has been named chairman, and retired IAS officer Achhelal Singh Yadav has been appointed as member. The official order was issued by Principal Secretary (Cooperation) Saurabh Babu. Cooperation Minister JPS Rathore informed that for some time, the posts of chairman and member had been vacant at the UP Cooperative Tribunal. He added that following the directions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Vinod Kumar Singh, a resident of Bahraich, has been entrusted with the key responsibility of the

chairman's post. Achhelal Singh Yadav, a resident of Ghazipur and former Special Secretary in the Cooperation Department, has been appointed as member. The cooperation minister extended his best wishes to the newly-appointed officials and expressed confidence that under their leadership, the Cooperative Tribunal will function more efficiently and ensure speedy resolution of pending cases. He added that Vinod Kumar Singh has deep experience in judicial matters, while Achhelal Singh Yadav made commendable contributions through various reformative initiatives during his tenure in the Cooperation Department. The expertise of both senior officials will now infuse new energy into the Cooperative Tribunal, making the judicial process in the cooperative sector more effective, he added.

Man critically injured in celebratory firing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

A man was injured in celebratory firing during a tilak ceremony in Anoop Kheda village of Bijnor police station area on Friday night. Police reached the spot and with the help of locals admitted the injured to Lokbandhu Hospital. Police said that the injured Amit Yadav (26), a resident of Chunnu Kheda village in the Para police station area, was shot at on his shoulder during

celebratory firing at the tilak ceremony of Rajkumar Yadav's son Akash. According to the doctors, Amit's condition is critical. The police is investigating the matter. The police are yet to find the man who opened fire that injured the victim. The police are also yet to ascertain the weapon used in celebratory firing. The firing caused a chaos in the function with a stampede like situation and several guests suffered injuries as they fell over one other in the hurry to flee.

3 die in massive blast at firecracker factory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ SAHARANPUR

Three workers died of burn injuries after a massive explosion at a firecracker factory here triggered a blaze on Saturday, an official said. The sound of the blast in the Nihal Khedi village in the early morning hours echoed in around a two-kilometre stretch. Saharanpur District Magistrate Manish Bansal informed reporters that the incident occurred around 4:30 am and several workers were present at that time. Three workers died due to burn injuries, he said. Upon receiving information about the blaze, police personnel, a forensic team, and fire tenders were rushed to the spot for rescue operations. Three operators of the factory have been taken into police custody, Bansal said, adding that while the unit possessed a license to manufacture firecrackers, the specific types of crackers being made were being probed. Officials fear extensive damage since people were working in the factory at the time and the building collapsed in the force of the blast. Villagers claimed that many illegal firecracker factories were running in the area and blamed the "negligence" of the administration for it.

In The Court Of Sh. Ashutosh Kumar, District Judge (Commercial Court-01), West District, Delhi, Room No. 201, Extension Block (New), Second Floor, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi Civil DJ No. 871/2024

M/s Sita Ram And Company Pvt.Ltd. ...plaintiff
-versus-
Aftab Alam Ansari ...defendant

Summon For Publication/Plaintiff Requiring Attendance Of Defendant (order 5 Rule 20 Of CPC 1908)

To,
Mr. Aftab Alam Ansari, Proprietor of M/s Arhan Timber Merchant, R/o- 0, Chini Mill Colony Road, Mahmudabad, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh - 261203. Whereas, the above-named plaintiff has instituted the above-noted suit against you, and the Hon'ble Court is satisfied that summons could not be served upon you in the ordinary manner under the provisions of Order 5 of the CPC. You are hereby directed to appear before this Court on 13/05/2025 at 10:00 AM, either in person or through a duly authorised pleader, to answer the claim of the plaintiff. Failing which, the suit shall be heard and decided ex-parte in accordance with law. Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 16th day of April, 2025, at Delhi.

District Judge (Commercial) West District, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

CM warns those threatening India's security 'Will respond in language they understand'

... distributes loans, grants, houses, tractor keys to beneficiaries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lakhimpur Kheri

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath once again issued a strong warning to those threatening India's security, saying that the New India is ready to respond to those who threaten its security in a language they understand.

He added that New India does not trouble anyone, but under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, it will not spare anyone who threatens peace.

The chief minister distributed loans, grants, houses and tractor keys to beneficiaries of various schemes during an event in Lakhimpur Kheri on Saturday.

He strongly condemned the terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam, offering condolences and tributes on behalf of the people of UP. He said, "There is no place for terrorism and chaos in a civilised society."

The chief minister stated that the Government of India's model, centered on service, security and good governance, prioritises development, welfare and safety for all. Under the policy of zero tolerance, Uttar Pradesh has been freed from mafias, anarchy and riots, and is emerging as one of the nation's leading economies.

During the event, farmers from the Bijwa and Palia blocks came up on stage and thanked Chief Minister Yogi for his efforts in flood control.

Referring to Uttar Pradesh as a state of modern infrastructure, the chief minister remarked, "Whether faced with floods or diseases, the new Uttar Pradesh of New India is advancing effectively to find solutions."

Chief Minister Yogi recalled his visit to the flood-affected areas of Palia and Nighasan last year, where he assured the people of a permanent solution. "With the support of public representatives, the Jal Shakti Department is working to channelise the Sharda river," he said, adding that this initiative will safeguard both farmers' fields and residential areas from floods.

Currently, work is underway to construct a 7-kilometre-long channel, and



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during an event in Lakhimpur Kheri on Saturday.

while his visit was planned for early April, he directed officials to expedite the process, which is now progressing rapidly. The chief minister said that the money spent by the government was not the personal wealth of the chief minister or ministers, but the hard-earned tax money of the people. He mentioned a proposal to build embankments at a cost of Rs 180 crore but questioned how a mud embankment could stop 3 to 3.25 lakh cusecs of water flowing into the Sharda river. He emphasised the need to properly channel the river, use dredgers and create a clear path to provide a permanent solution to the flood issue.

Chief Minister Yogi directed that the same work be completed for just Rs 22 crore instead of Rs 180 crore, with a completion deadline of June 10. He assured that, once finished, floodwaters would no longer threaten Palia, Nighasan or Lakhimpur Kheri. Instead, they would flow smoothly into the Saryu river.

By channelising the Sharda river, water will follow its natural course, safeguarding

farmers, crops, homes and livestock, while minimising loss of life and property and around 400 villages, 2.5 lakh people, and 10,000 hectares of land will be protected from floods. He also praised local representatives for their support in finding a permanent solution to flooding.

Chief Minister Yogi highlighted that Lakhimpur is reaching new heights, with the establishment of a medical college — once just a dream. He also noted that tourism potential will grow through Dudhwa National Park and that funds have been allocated for building an airport in Lakhimpur Kheri, with steps being taken to protect the site from flooding by the Suheli river and nearby water bodies.

Chief Minister Yogi remarked further that farmers, youth and women were the top priority of the double-engine government. He reminded the gathering that the government had started its work by waiving farmers' loans and that every farmer was now receiving benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme. "We said from the beginning that no one would

be allowed to exploit farmers," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi pointed out that before 2017, farmers would often wait for up to 10 years to receive their sugarcane payments but today, no payment was older than one year. Out of 122 sugar mills, 105 are clearing payments within a week and for the remaining 17 mills where delays persist, solutions are being worked out, he added.

To ensure farmers get their money, the government has set up an escrow account — a joint account where the proceeds from sugar sales will first go directly to farmers before reaching the sugar mill owners. "If anyone still tries to cheat, the government will auction the sugar mill to recover the farmers' dues," he warned.

The chief minister strongly criticised the Samajwadi Party, saying that during their time in power, they pushed farmers to suicide, forced youth to migrate and shielded criminals who threatened the safety of women, daughters, sisters and traders. "Today, governance is firmly focused on ensuring the security of all," he asserted.

Complete flood prevention preparations by June 10: Yogi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lakhimpur Kheri

During a review meeting at Dudhwa Tiger Reserve on Saturday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reviewed flood prevention preparations and directed that all projects be completed between June 10 and 12, with a nodal officer appointed for supervision.

The chief minister reviewed the presentations made by the Forest and Tourism departments. He also took updates from the district magistrate on development works in the district. Before this, the chief minister planted a moulisari sapling in the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve park and visited various stalls set up there.

During the review meeting, Chief Minister Yogi issued key instructions to local, forest and tourism officials, directing them to prepare development plans in coordination with public representatives. He also reviewed the district's development progress and law and order situation.

After reviewing the Forest Department's presentation, Chief Minister Yogi directed officials to boost tourism and sought year-wise tourist footfall data for Dudhwa. He also reviewed the Tourism Department's plans, emphasising better connectivity, hotel development, and engaging locals as tourist guides.

The chief minister directed the Forest and Tourism departments to work together to prepare a plan within 15 days to develop Dudhwa Tiger Reserve as an eco-tourism hub. He stressed the need to offer excellent facilities to visitors.

During the meeting, he further instructed police, Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and forest officers to conduct joint patrolling in forest areas to prevent illegal logging and protect wildlife. He also directed that better connectivity facilities be provided.

To prevent human-wildlife conflict, the chief minister ordered that villagers near forest areas be trained and solar fencing be installed around the villages. He was briefed about efforts to rejuvenate the Suheli river, with the district magistrate informing that cleaning work is underway along a 5-kilometre stretch. He also instructed that proper cleaning and drainage arrangements be made through MGNREGA and the Irrigation Department.

He accused the Congress and SP of dividing society in the name of caste, dishonouring heroes like Chhatrapati Shivaji and Rana Sanga while glorifying cruel rulers like Aurangzeb and Babur.

Referring to an incident two years ago, Chief Minister Yogi pointed out that during the Run for Unity event on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary, the SP leaders attempted to glorify Jinnah and even wanted to rename events after their own family members. "Our government restored the Kannauj medical college in the name of Baba Saheb Ambedkar," he added. The chief minister emphasised that Bharatiya Janata Party is working for security, service, self-reliance and the welfare of the poor.

Extending his wishes for Akshaya Tritiya and Lord Parashuram Jayanti on April 30, the chief minister highlighted ongoing development projects like the Gola Gokarnath Corridor and the expansion of Dudhwa National Park.

During the event, several senior leaders and officials were present, including Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh, Excise Minister Nitin Agarwal, MLAs Harvinder Kumar alias Romi Sahni, Vinod Shankar Awasthi, Aman Giri, Lokendra Pratap Singh, Yogesh Verma, Manju Tyagi, Shashank Verma, Saurabh Singh Sonu, BJP district president Sunil Singh, Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob and District Magistrate Durga Shakti Nagpal.

The chief minister distributed tractors to Bholaram, Balchandra and Prithvi Lal. He also handed over keys to houses under the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana to Sanev, Meena Devi, Neetu, Kusuma and Reema. Under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, revolving funds were given to 358 self-help groups, while 882 groups received CIF demo cheques totaling Rs 14,30,40,000. The cheques were received by Sunita Devi, Renu, Archana, Shabana, and Ranjoo Devi. As part of the CM Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan, cheques were also handed over to Ahilya Rana, Vaishali Diwakar, Himanshu Jaiswal, Vineet Kumar Patel, and Rachit Agarwal.

... INSPECTS CHANNELISATION WORK OF RIVER BY BOAT

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath first reviewed details about the Sharda river channelisation project. He then boarded a boat to inspect the ongoing work personally. During the inspection, Chief Minister Yogi gave necessary instructions to the officials on site.

CM Yogi inspects Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lakhimpur Kheri

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inspected the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve on Saturday, toured stalls, interacted with the Tharu community and honoured women with certificates of appreciation for their outstanding contributions.

Upon his arrival, women from the Tharu community welcomed the chief minister. He visited exhibitions showcasing banana-based products supported by NABARD and displays set up by women from self-help groups. Impressed by their efforts, the chief minister awarded certificates to several women for their exceptional work. During the inspection, Chief Minister Yogi also reviewed initiatives aimed at minimising human-wildlife conflict. He observed exhibitions by WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) featuring tranquilliser guns, trail cameras, drones and the rapid response team (RRT) set-up. Additionally, he



interacted with medical professionals present at the reserve.

The chief minister also interacted with foreign tourists during his visit. He enquired about the arrangements at the reserve. The foreign tourists

expressed satisfaction with the facilities. The chief minister instructed forest officials to take care of all visitors and ensure that all necessary services are provided.

He also visited the Salukapur Elephant Camp. There, he named a baby elephant 'Bhavani'. He also fed four elephants with fodder, bananas and other treats. During the visit, Cabinet Minister Swatantra Dev Singh, Minister-in-Charge Nitin Agrawal, Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, Minister of State for Forests (Independent Charge) Dr Arun Kumar Saxena, Minister of State KP Malik, Principal Secretary (Forests) Anil Kumar, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and head of department Sunil Chaudhary, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Anuradha Vemuri, Managing Director of Uttar Pradesh Forest Corporation KK Singh, Field Director of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve H Rajmohan, and Deputy Director Saurish Sahay were present.

Crackdown on illegal liquor business

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

Following Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's directives, a major crackdown on the illegal liquor trade is underway across Uttar Pradesh. Joint operations by the Excise Department, Police and administrative teams have led to extensive raids, vehicle checkings and secret investigations, resulting in the seizure of 5,838.57 litres of illicit liquor, including country-made, Indian-made foreign liquor and raw liquor, and the arrest of several offenders across several districts.

Joint teams of the Excise department and police carried out extensive raids in rural areas across several districts including Moradabad, Sitapur, Unnao, Gorakhpur, Sultanpur, Pilibhit, Gonda, Balrampur, Bahraich, Hardoi, Kushinagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, Jhansi, Rampur, Prayagraj, Ambedkar Nagar, Barabanki, Siddharthnagar, Sant Kabir Nagar, Muzaffarnagar, Lalitpur, Mainpuri, Basti, Meerut, Mirzapur, Shravasti, Jaunpur, Sonbhadra, Fatehpur, Hamirpur and Bareilly. Among the districts, Lakhimpur Kheri reported the highest seizures. In Jhansi, authorities recovered 590 litres of illicit raw liquor during operations. In Unnao, raids in villages like Champa Purwa, Mohan, Nyotani, Shakurabad, Rampur, Mawaiya, Kedar Kheda and Rasoolpur Mahigwa led to the seizure of 280 litres of illicit liquor and the destruction of 700 kilograms of lahan.

In Lakhimpur Kheri, operations in villages such as Golouli Basbirwa, Basantapur, Kusmi Colony, Bhatpurwa, Baikuan Rahjaniya, Nayagaon, and Jamuniya Kadhile resulted in the confiscation of 300 litres of illicit liquor and the destruction of 1,270 kilograms of lahan.

Excise teams also uncovered illegal liquor production at brick kilns in Gorakhpur,

Sultanpur, Pilibhit and Deoria. In Gorakhpur-Deoria, authorities seized 20 litres of raw liquor and destroyed 100 kilograms of lahan. In Sultanpur, 35 litres of illicit liquor were seized, and 150 kilograms of lahan were destroyed.

At the Uttarakhanda-Moradabad border, the assistant excise commissioner (EIB) conducted intense vehicle checkings to stop liquor smuggling. Similar checks were carried out at the Bijnor-Moradabad border and Delhi-Moradabad Zero Point, preventing illegal liquor transport. In Unnao, 134.97 bulk litres of foreign liquor from Haryana were seized from two cars near the Jogi Kot underpass on the Agra Expressway, leading to the arrest of three smugglers.

The crackdown also resulted in the large-scale destruction of lahan, which is used in the production of illicit liquor. A total of 16,280 kilograms (162.8 quintals) of lahan were destroyed across various districts, with major operations in Lakhimpur Kheri (1950 kg and 1750 kg) and Jhansi (1000 kg).

A total of 28 individuals were arrested during the operation. Arrests included three women and four others in Unnao, two women in Jhansi, one person in Pilibhit, and three people in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Lalitpur, Hamirpur, and Fatehpur. Additionally, three smugglers were arrested in Unnao for smuggling foreign liquor. District excise officers in Rampur and Muzaffarnagar also conducted surprise inspections at liquor shops. In Rampur, inspections were carried out at the Bilaspur wholesale license (FL2) and liquor shops, where vendors were warned against overpricing and instructed to conduct sales via PoS machines. In Muzaffarnagar, shops at the Morna Sugar Mill and desi-composite liquor stores were inspected, and physical verification of the syrup quantity was conducted. Shops were directed to display rate lists, toll-free numbers, and QR codes.

Govt gears up to make all 75 UP dists 'AI-skilled'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government has launched an ambitious initiative to make the state a leading hub for artificial intelligence (AI). A detailed roadmap is in place to train 1.5 lakh individuals every month in AI technologies, with the goal of making the workforce across all 75 districts 'AI-enabled' and positioning each district as a new center of innovation. The Centre for e-Governance (CeG) under the IT and Electronics Department will serve as the nodal agency, overseeing implementation, providing direction, and ensuring the achievement of targets through continuous monitoring across all districts.

The initiative is a key part of the Yogi Adityanath government's mission to make Uttar Pradesh a one-trillion-dollar economy, backed by partnerships with global companies and the use of corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds. As per the plan prepared by the IT and Electronics Department, AI-based technology training will be made available in every district to establish Uttar Pradesh as a hub of AI-driven technologies.

The action plan will roll out in three phases. In the first phase, over 3,500 trainers will be prepared within two months through a specialised curriculum. The second phase will see the establishment of training centres and the launch of AI training programmes across the state. In the third phase, master trainers will skill 1.5 lakh individuals every month in AI technologies, ensuring sustained, large-scale impact. Through multiple batches conducted daily, approximately one million individuals will be trained in AI technologies within four to six months. This training initiative targets state government employees, teachers, professors, doctors, students, professionals, non-governmental organisations, progressive farmers, service centre personnel and women.

HDFC BANK		Legal Cell:		POSSESSION NOTICE APPENDIX IV	
HDFC Bank Ltd 2nd Floor Vardaan Khand, Gombi Nagar Extn, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 226010. <td colspan="2">We understand your world <td colspan="2">RULE 8(1)</td> </td>		We understand your world <td colspan="2">RULE 8(1)</td>		RULE 8(1)	
Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of the HDFC Bank Ltd. under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notices, and calling upon to pay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. Details are given as under:-					
Customer Name	Description of the Immovable Property	13(2) Notice Date	Notice Amt.	13(2) Notice Date	Notice Amt.
1. Ms Tiwari Enterprises Through Its Partners Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari & Mr. Akshaya Tiwari (Borrower) 2. Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari S/o Jitendra Pal Tiwari (Guarantor) 3. Mr. Akshay Tiwari S/o Mr. Arun Kumar Tiwari (Guarantor) 4. Mrs. Aruna Tiwari W/o Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari (Guarantor & Mortgagee)	Building Built On Plot No.817, Admeasuring 562.34 Sq. Mtr., Situated At- Civil Line Hospital Road, Pargana-bangar, Tehsil & Dist-Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh (Property Owned By Mrs. Aruna Tiwari). Bounded As Under:- East: Lane Road West: Road Lane North: Land Of Kashi Prasad South: Lane Patri.	29-08-2024	Rs. 9,15,226.00/-	23.04.2025	
1. Ms Balaji Oil Company Through Its Partners Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari & Mr. Akshaya Tiwari (Borrower) 2. Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari S/o Jitendra Pal Tiwari (CoBorrower) 3. Mrs. Aruna Tiwari W/o Mr. Anup Kumar Tiwari (Co-Borrower & Mortgagee) 4. Mr. Akshay Tiwari S/o Mr. Arun Kumar Tiwari (co-Borrower)	Property Free Hold Nazul Plot No.817, Admeasuring 562.34 Sq. Mtr., Situated At- Mohalla-civil Line Hospital Road, Pargana-bangar, Tehsil & Dist-Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh (Property Owned By Mrs. Aruna Tiwari) Bounded As Under:- East: Lane Road West: Road Patri North: Land Of Kashi Prasad South: Lane Patri.	26-10-2024	Rs. 69,21,728.00/-	23.04.2025	
The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on above mentioned dates. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to charge of the HDFC Bank Ltd. for an amount of notices mentioned above and interest thereon together with expenses and charges etc. less amount paid, if any. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.					
Place :- Hardoi		DATE :- 23.04.2025		Authorised Officer, HDFC Bank Ltd.	

Indiabulls Enterprises Limited						
(CIN: U71290HR2019PLC077579)						
Extract of Audited Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter and year ended 31 March 2025						
Particulars	Quarter ended 31-Mar-25	Quarter ended 31-Dec-24	Quarter ended 31-Mar-24	Year ended 31-Mar-25	Year ended 31-Mar-24	(Rs. in Crores)
	Refer note-3	Unaudited	Refer note-3	Audited	Audited	
Total Income from operations	15.53	13.72	14.67	58.67	58.76	
Net (Loss)/Profit for the period (before Tax, minority interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of associates, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	(119.14)	(2.34)	(18.81)	(137.81)	(25.20)	
Net (Loss)/Profit for the period (before Tax, minority interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of associates (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	(119.14)	(2.34)	(18.81)	(137.81)	(25.20)	
Net (Loss)/Profit for the period (after Tax, minority interest and Share of Profit / (Loss) of associates (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	(119.12)	(2.13)	(18.36)	(136.61)	(25.24)	
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	(119.45)	(2.14)	(18.92)	(436.92)	(25.33)	
Equity share capital	39.67	39.67	39.67	39.67	39.67	
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve) as shown in the audited Balance Sheet				(230.85)	206.07	
Earnings per share (EPS) of Rs.2 each from continuing operations						
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(6.02)	(0.10)	(0.95)	(6.93)	(1.37)	
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(6.02)	(0.10)	(0.95)	(6.93)	(1.37)	
Earnings per share (EPS) of Rs.2 each from discontinued operations						
- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	0.01	(0.00)	0.02	0.04	0.10	
- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	0.01	(0.00)	0.02	0.04	0.10	
Notes:						
1. The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved at the meeting of the Board of Directors held on 26 April 2025.						
2. Key standalone Financial information:						
Particulars	Quarter ended 31-Mar-25	Quarter ended 31-Dec-24	Quarter ended 31-Mar-24	Year ended 31-Mar-25	Year ended 31-Mar-24	(Rs. in Crores)
	Refer note-3	Unaudited	Refer note-3	Audited	Audited	
Total Income	13.72	12.13	12.43	57.91	48.43	
(Loss)/Profit before Tax	(7.76)	(0.21)	(17.88)	(12.84)	(33.00)	
Net Loss/Profit after Tax	(7.55)	(0.28)	(17.95)	(11.96)	(33.39)	
3. Figures for the quarters ended 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2024 represent the balancing figures between the audited figures for the full financial year and published reviewed year to date figures upto third quarter of the respective financial year.						
4. The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly / annual financial results filed with the stock exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / annual Financial Results are available on the Company's website (https://www.indiabullsenterprises.com) and on the website of BSE (https://www.bseindia.com) and NSE (https://www.nseindia.com).						
Registered Office: 5th Floor, Plot No. 108, IT Park, Udyog Vihar, Phase-1 Gurugram, Haryana 122016			For and on behalf of Board of Directors		The same can be accessed by scanning the QR code provided below	
Place : Gurugram Date : 26 April 2025			Vijay Kumar Agarwal Executive Director			

Government taking measures for employment opportunities: Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Saturday that his government is taking several measures to ensure that the opportunities for employment and self-employment keep growing.

Addressing the 15th edition of Rozgar Mela after distributing more than 51,000 appointment letters to recruits in different departments of the central government, he said it is a time for unprecedented opportunities for youngsters.

In the virtual event, he noted that the International Monetary Fund has said India will remain the fastest-growing major economy, asserting that employment opportunities will be rising in every sector.

The production and export in automobile and footwear industries have hit new records, generating employment in large numbers, Modi said.

Citing the difference his government has made, the prime minister listed out that cargo being handled through inland water transport has surged to 145 million tonnes from 18 million tonnes before 2014 while national waterways have increased from five to 110, and their length from 2,700 km to over 5,000 km. The prime minister said a high highlight was that growth has been inclusive and noted that the participation of women has risen in every sector.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually attends a Rozgar Mela event

country's youth continue to grow.

Mentioning initiatives like Skill India, Startup India, and Digital India, the prime minister said they are creating new opportunities for the youth and providing an open platform to showcase their talents.

India's youth are demonstrating to the world through their dedication and innovation the immense potential that the country possesses, he added.

Modi asserted that the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES), to be held in Mumbai, will also be a big opportunity for youngsters to showcase their skills on a global platform.

They will also get to understand Artificial Intelligence and immersive media, and the event will infuse a new energy into the sphere of digital content, he said, adding that for innovators in the media, gaming, and entertainment, WAVES is an unprecedented opportunity to showcase their talent.

In this budget, the prime minister said, the government has announced the 'Manufacturing Mission' with a goal to promote the 'Make in India' initiative and provide the country's youth with the opportunity to create products of global standards.

"Manufacturing Mission will not only support millions of MSMEs and small entrepreneurs across the country but will also open up new employment avenues nationwide," Modi added.

Three of the five toppers in this year's UPSC exam are women, he said, adding over 90 lakh self-help groups have more than 10 crore women working for them.

India's women power is scaling new heights in fields ranging from bureaucracy to space and science, and the government is also focusing on empowering rural women, he said.

In this decade, the youth has powered

India's rise in technology, data, and innovation, Modi said while noting that the country leads in real-time digital transactions. When the youth actively contributes to nation-building, the country experiences accelerated development and earns recognition on the global stage, he said. Modi said his government is ensuring at every step that employment and self-employment opportunities for the

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to resume after 5-year pause

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

India and China will, after a gap of five years, resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra from June. This move is seen as an attempt to normalise the ties between the two countries that nosedived following the standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday said the Yatra is set to take place from June to August via two routes — Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La in Sikkim.

The pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake in China's Tibet Autonomous Region holds religious significance to Hindus as well as Jains and Buddhists. "Kailash Mansarovar Yatra organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is set to take place during June to August 2025," it said.

The Yatra was suspended initially in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently because of the military standoff between the two sides on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. The militaries of India and China completed disengagement of troops at the two remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang under a pact sealed on October 21 last year.

Two days later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks in the Russian city of Kazan and agreed to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms.

Following the Modi-Xi talks, the two

sides held a series of meetings in the last few months which were aimed at normalising the bilateral relations.

In January, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Beijing and held talks with his Chinese counterpart Sun Weidong. In the meeting, the two sides decided to resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra and agreed to take certain people-centric steps to "stabilise and rebuild" ties.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday said the Yatra is set to take place from June to August via two routes — Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La in Sikkim

"This year, five batches, each consisting of 50 Yatris, and 10 batches, each consisting of 50 Yatris, are scheduled to travel through Uttarakhand State crossing over at Lipulekh Pass, and through Sikkim state crossing over at Nathu La Pass, respectively," the MEA said in the readout.

The applications for the Yatra can be submitted at the website: kmy.gov.in, it noted.

The Yatris will be selected from among applicants through a "fair, computer-generated, random and gender-balanced" selection process, MEA said.

"Since 2015, the entire process commencing with on-line application till selection of Yatris is a fully computerised process," according to the MEA.

Kashmiriyat lives on as pony wallah loses his life, shielding guests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

A pony wallah who laid down his life trying to save visitors to his homeland, a guide who rescued a family of 11 and countless locals are among those who added another dimension to Kashmir's hospitality when terror struck Pahalgam on a calm Tuesday afternoon.

In what is the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019, terrorists opened fire in Baisaran, a popular tourist spot in the upper reaches of Pahalgam in Kashmir, killing 26 people, mostly holidaymakers from other states.

As tourists and families of victims from across the country reached home from Kashmir and outrage spread, stories of locals helping those who were stuck in the terrifying ordeal flooded in. Kashmir, their stories told the world, was also about those who had saved their lives and extended a helping hand in times of their greatest crisis.

When the initial list of victims was made public, Syed Adil Hussain Shah's was the only name of a local. The story of his bravery made thousands, including Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah, attend his funeral on Wednesday in Pahalgam's Hapatnagar village.

As the families of Kaustubh Ganbote and Santosh Jagdale, two of the victims, stood face to face with the armed terrorists, the 30-year-old pony wallah confronted

ed them asking why they were killing innocent people. In a courageous attempt to protect the tourist, the young man tried to snatch away the weapon. Shah succumbed to three bullets to the chest.

Asavari Jagdale, who lost her father Santosh Jagdale and uncle Kaustubh Ganbote, recalled being helped by another pony rider as they escaped the mayhem.

"I gathered courage and managed to escape with my mother and aunt. While coming down, my mother suffered leg injuries. A pony rider offered us support and hope. He gave us a pony ride to our driver," Asavari, who had travelled from Pune, recounted.

She added that her cab driver and pony ride operator were "like angels sent from God who stood by her at the time of the attack." "The pony ride operator did not leave us behind, he was with us. He rescued my aunt, mother and me from the spot," she said.

The cab driver remained in touch even after she left Srinagar and "offered to help in every possible way."

"He asked us to tell him any help we need, whether it was money. He is a driver who still wants to help us. He was crying on the call and also when I was leaving from Srinagar. I thanked him, I told him that because of his presence I did not feel lonely. He cried saying that he is sad for my loss. They were like angels sent by God."



Syed Adil Hussain Shah FILE PHOTO

Nazakat Ahmed Shah, a cousin of Shah, was also at the venue of the massacre and was instrumental in saving the lives of 11 tourists, including three children.

The 28-year-old had taken four couples and three children to Baisaran on the last leg of their Kashmir trip. Just before the group was about to leave the location, the sound of gunfire alerted Nazakat who fell to the ground with two of the children.

"My first concern was the safety of the tourist families. I took Lucky's kid and another child and lay down on the ground. The area was fenced so it was not easy to escape. I noticed a small opening and asked the families to move out through that opening. They asked me to save the chil-

dren first. I slipped through it with the two kids, and ran towards Pahalgam town," Nazakat said. After depositing the children in a safe place, he returned to the spot and escorted the others out safely. "Thanks to Allah, I took all our 11 guests safely to Pahalgam," he said.

The story of Nazakat's selfless act came out when Arvind Agrawal, one of the tourists, posted pictures of him and his daughter with Shah on his social media handle. "You saved our lives by risking your own, we will never be able to repay the debt of Nazakat Bhai," he wrote.

Kuldeep Shapak, another tourist, wrote on social media: "Nazakat bhai, you not only saved my life that day, you kept humanity alive. I will never forget you for the rest of my life."

An indelible face of compassion above all else was tourist guide Sajad Ahmad Bhat. Videos of him scurrying down the mountainside with a child on his back were circulated widely and many wanted to know who this brave, helpful man was.

"Humanity above all... this is the murder of humanity," Bhat said.

When he reached the meadow, many were crying for help. "We carried the injured on our ponies and took them to the Pahalgam hospital. We took at least 18-20 injured on ponies. There were two-three other men who carried people on their back. I carried a child on my back, offered water, took him to the hospital," the

shawl vendor and guide said.

Termining the attack a blot on humanity, he said all of Kashmir is in mourning. "They should have instead killed us, it should not have happened to them (the tourists). We want to tell all Indians that we stand with them... We are all Indians."

Then there were those who were saved by cautious locals.

A five-member family from Buldhana district in Maharashtra vacationing in Pahalgam was about to step out for local sightseeing on the fateful day, unaware of the terror attack, but was stopped by the owner and staff of their hotel from going out in view of the tense situation.

Another couple from Maharashtra was helped by locals in quickly moving away from the site and reaching their hotel safely. Sakshi and Krishna Lorge, hailing from Nanded in Maharashtra, were at the Baisaran meadow some 15 minutes before the gunmen burst into the meadow.

"We heard the sound of firing after we moved a little away from the place," Sakshi said.

"If there was no support from local people, who helped us to move away fast, we would have not been able to make this video.

The local people helped the tourists a lot," she said in a video shot from her hotel. Her husband Krishna said their pony ride operators quickly rushed them down the hill.

Centre to study Pakistan's maximum water use

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Centre is planning to undertake a study to look into ways to maximise the use of the quantum of water from the three rivers that Pakistan had earlier used under the Indus Water Treaty, now that the agreement has been suspended, officials said. The proposal was made at a high-level meeting on Friday chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah that discussed the future course of action on the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, which has been kept in abeyance following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

Under the World Bank-brokered treaty, India was granted exclusive rights to the water of the eastern rivers - the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi - amounting to an average annual flow of about 33 million acre-feet (MAF). The water of the western rivers - the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab - with an average annual flow of around 135 MAF, were largely allocated to Pakistan.

With the treaty now put in abeyance, the government is looking at ways to utilise the water of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab.

After Friday's high-level meeting, Jal Shakti Minister C R Paati asserted that the government is working on a strategy to ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has issued a slew of directives, and the meeting was held to follow up on them. Shah made several suggestions at the meeting for their effective implementation. "We will ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan from India," the Jal Shakti Minister had said after the meeting. Sources said the government is working on a long-term plan to ensure the effective implementation of its decisions. According to an official, the ministry has been asked to conduct a study to look at ways to utilise the water from the three western rivers.

Experts have spoken about the lack of infrastructure that may limit India's capability of completely utilising the water it gets from the decision to suspend the treaty. "The real issue is with the western rivers where infrastructure limitations prevent us from immediately stopping water flows," Himanshu Thakkar of the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People said.

CRPF QAT first team to respond to Pahalgam attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

A quick action team (QAT) of CRPF commandos was the first responder to the ghastly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam. The team reached the Baisaran meadow only to find droves of holidaymakers rushing down and three men who were shot at, officials said on Saturday.

The Delta company location of the CRPF's 116 battalion is the nearest security base, about four to five kilometres, from the scenic tourist spot where Pakistan-sponsored terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, on April 22.

Rajesh Kumar, the commanding officer of the CRPF battalion, was moving out of the camp when he saw a number of "ponywallahs" and some tourists pacing down hurriedly from the heights, prompting him to stop them and ask questions. The ponywallahs said, "sahab, kuch hua hai upar Baisaran mein, Shayad goliyan chali hain (sir, something has happened at Baisaran, Bullets have probably been fired)", the officials said.

The CO immediately asked his QAT, stationed nearby, to report and a team of about 25 commandos soon began the 40-45 minute trek on the slushy and rocky track to reach the meadow.

The troops, the officials said, were mindful while climbing up as there was a huge possibility of pin-pointed fire coming from the top or a grenade being lobbed by the terrorists.

In the meantime, the local CRPF unit erected checkpoints around Pahalgam town and "secured" vantage points near the incident spot, they added.

The company commander of the Delta unit, Assistant Commandant Raashi Sikarwar, also joined in and was "tasked by the CO to take care of women and children as many of them were injured, screaming and scared".

The CRPF unit was "astonished" to find three men with bullet injuries lying on the ground and some women, chil-

dren and men hiding at different places when they reached the meadow around 2:30 pm on the fateful day.

The injured were evacuated by the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) QAT personnel even as they did a brief combing of the area to look for the assailants as it was "clear in their minds that it was a terrorist attack".

The local station house officer (SHO) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police had arrived at the scene by then and the two forces joined efforts to take control of the situation.

Bodies were scattered, one was found near the gate of the meadow while at one spot, three of four were piled up, the officials said.

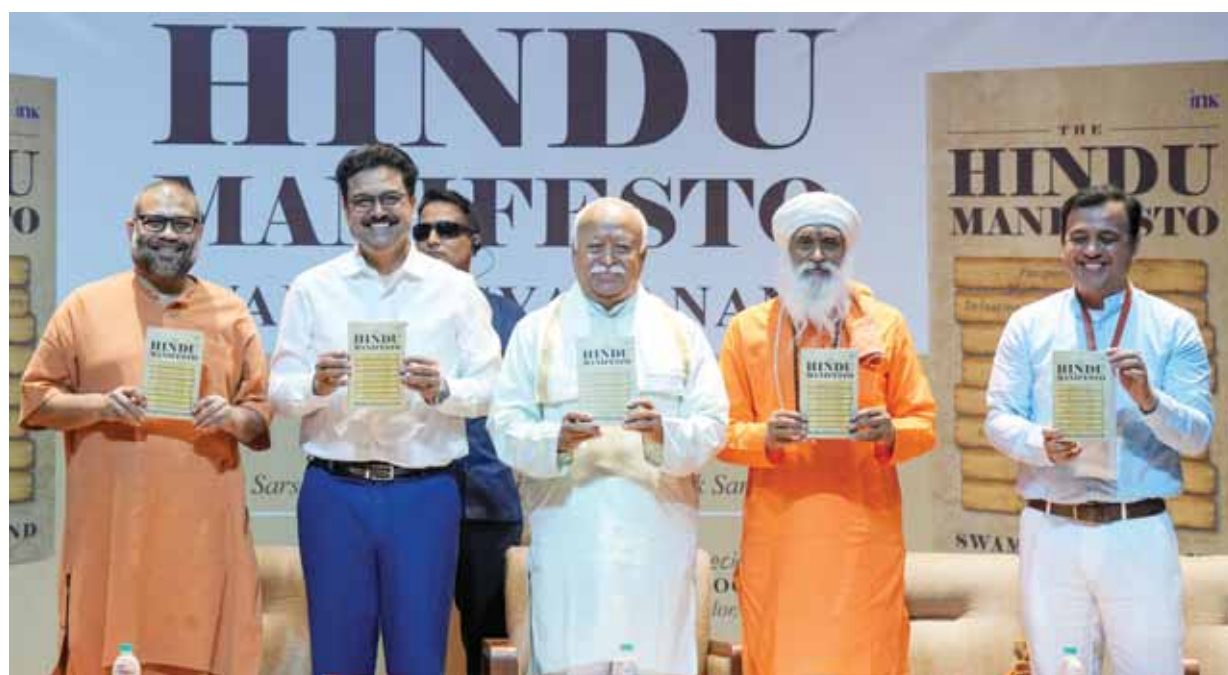
One of the injured men died, while the other two survived and were admitted to a nearby government hospital. About 30 to 40 tourists were housed in the Delta company's mess and provided with food and water, the officials said.

A senior security officer said the CRPF Delta company has all its units deployed across the area, including with the local police, and only a platoon strength (about 22 to 24 personnel) is usually available at the base.

There is a unit of the 3rd battalion of the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) a little far from the incident spot, he said.

These forces are not deployed for the security of the Baisaran meadow like many other tourist spots in the Kashmir valley. The upper reaches and dense forest areas in the valley are secured by routine patrols and by way of deployment when additional troops arrive ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra in late May or June, the officer said.

The security forces, including the police, paramilitary and Army, have been asked to intensify operations and keep a "heightened vigil" in the wake of the attack, the biggest after the 2019 Pulwama strike, in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed when their convoy was bombed by terrorists.



RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat along with Swami Vigyanand and DU VC Yogesh Singh, Swami Krishnashah Vidyarthi and others during the launch of book 'Hindu Manifesto' by Swami Vigyanand, at the PM Museum in New Delhi

Humans to blame for drop in three-striped roofed turtles

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The three-striped roofed turtle, once found in numbers in the Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers, has now largely disappeared with a government-funded study detecting an over 80 per cent drop in its population in half a century, largely due to habitat loss, illegal trade and pollution.

The study, supported by the National Mission for Clean Ganga, has revealed an alarmingly low genetic diversity in the rescued population of the freshwater reptile species, raising concerns over its long-term survival. Underscoring the urgent need for science-backed conservation efforts, the study called for long-term genetic tracking, stricter enforcement against poaching, and efforts to restore the semi-aquatic turtle's habitat, especially in its last stronghold - the National Chambal Sanctuary.

The sanctuary is located on the Chambal

river near the tri-point of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

"The population of Batagur dhongoka (three-striped roofed turtle) has experienced a substantial decline due to entanglement in fishing nets, the construction of major hydrological projects affecting river flow dynamics and nesting beaches, water pollution, and the detrimental effects of illegal trade," the study said.

Researchers from the Wildlife Institute of India analysed genetic samples from the turtles housed at two Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Centres - TRRC in Varanasi and GARRC in Narora - part of a captive care initiative under the Namami Gange programme. Using mitochondrial DNA and microsatellite markers, the study found that the population exhibit low levels of genetic variation, a warning sign for any species on the brink.

The genetic data showed only weak structuring between the two populations,

one from TRRC in Varanasi and the other from GARRC in Narora, suggesting past intermixing but also indicating the danger of inbreeding. The average heterozygosity was under 50 per cent and many individual turtles carried similar genetic markers. Moreover, the demographic pattern estimated by the Bayesian skyline plot (BSP) analysis indicates historical stability followed by growth in the effective population size, with a recent reduction in population size from 2,000 years ago.

The study flagged a major concern for the ongoing rehabilitation programme - a lack of clarity around the geographic origin of some rescued turtles. This not only makes it harder to plan successful reintroductions but also raises the risk of outbreeding depression if genetically mismatched turtles are placed with wild populations, it said.

"Gathering information on the geographic origin of individual (turtles) is

sometimes difficult and the release of these unknown origin rescue individuals in the wild is often accompanied by high initial losses of released individuals.

"Hence, while a small number of individual (turtles) are released locally, genetic monitoring is vital to understand the wider and long-term contemporary genetic diversity for effective management and conservation interventions," the research said. In order to ensure the effective protection and conservation of the three-striped roofed turtle, the government has taken a proactive measure by incorporating it into Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2022. Species under this schedule enjoys the highest level of protection.

The research from last year was among several key documents unveiled on a new portal launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to promote access to ecological data and conservation insights.



SAGE GREEN: A CALM CONSTANT

Elegant and easy to wear, has found its place across spring collections. Style a sage green ankle-length skirt with a cotton blouse and tan leather sandals. Gold jewellery and a handbag to look effortlessly stylish.

BUTTER YELLOW: LIGHT, BUT IMPACTFUL

Less vibrant than lemon and subtler than neon, this version of yellow adds warmth without overpowering. Pair a butter yellow. A line skirt with neutral-toned top with crossbody and gold hoops.



SKY BLUE: POLISHED AND CALM

Cool and collected, sky blue made appearances in shirting, light knits and versatile summer suiting. A cropped jacket in sky blue over a white dress, paired with trainers or loafers, makes for a look that is as wearable as it is elegant.

PASTEL PLAY:

Softest

Style

Power

BY SAKSHI PRIYA

August slipped away into a moment in time... Taylor Swift's lyric sets the tone for summer 2025 soft, romantic and full of feeling. This season, fashion is leaning into pastels with renewed purpose. From pistachio and butter yellow to powder pink, mint green and sky-blue, these shades have captured the spotlight across collections, editorials, and social feeds alike.

There's something undeniably fresh about the pastel palette this year. It speaks of calm confidence, easy elegance, and a desire for lightness after

seasons of excess. Designers are embracing subtle colour in strong silhouettes — flowing skirts, tailored suits, cropped jackets — proving that softness can be powerful.

Pastels are dominating social media too. Influencers are styling them head-to-toe, mixing them into beauty and lifestyle content and making them the season's most coveted colour story. These tones reflect a collective shift — towards clarity, wearability, and charm that lasts.

THIS SEASON ALSO WELCOMES MAUVE, PEACH BLUSH, LAVENDER AND POWDER MINT INTO THE SPOTLIGHT. MAUVE, LOOKS STUNNING IN SATIN SLIP SKIRTS

MINT GREEN: THE COOL CLASSIC

Soft yet fresh, brings a touch of coolness to the pastel spectrum. Whether in flared pants, pleated skirts or summer tops.

A mint green blouse tucked into white high-waisted trousers creates a breezy, polished outfit for sunny afternoons. Pair with white sandals and delicate jewellery for a balanced look.



PISTACHIO GREEN: THE REFINED REFRESH

Once reserved for interiors and gelato menus, pistachio green is now one of fashion's leading colours. A pistachio green dress paired with off-white heels and minimal jewellery creates pinterrest — worthy looks.



KEY PIECES:

- Pistachio-toned mini shoulder bags
- Sky blue ballet flats
- Blush pink belts and hairbands
- Lightweight scarves in tonal pastels

COTTON CANDY PINK: ROMANTIC, REWORKED

This pink is tender, not theatrical. Far from overly sweet, it is being presented in tailored, wearable shapes that make it ideal for grown-up dressing with a soft edge. A knee-length pleated skirt in pink with a neutral knit and ballet flats adds polish without looking overly styled.

In recent years, wearing pastels has shifted from being seen as a just style choice to a statement of sophistication. People now find themselves moving towards these colours because they're considered "aesthetic." You can wear a loud red, but the moment you wear pastel tone, you are labelled as aesthetically in tune with the times. It's almost as if every thing, in some way, has become about being 'aesthetic.'

Couture Gets a Twist



BY TEAM VIVA

When high fashion joins the art of refined indulgence, the result is bound to be enchanting. Celebrated couturier Suneet Varma and the iconic gin brand Tanqueray have presented "The OG Summer of Love," an evocative collaboration that exudes elegance and a touch of whimsy.

The highlight of the collection is the scarf, an artistic expression of Tanqueray's botanical roots. With motifs of juniper berries, citrus slices, and herbs rendered in delicate brushstrokes, the design is fresh, breezy, and undeniably chic. The palette — Tanqueray green offset by soft neutrals and bright botanical tones — makes it a perfect summer essential. It's a wearable poem, a nod to nature's fragrance and the joy of dressing up. You can imagine it fluttering softly in a sunlit garden party, paired with linen whites and laughter in the air.

Suneet Varma, known for his emotionally rich, opulent designs, lends his philosophy — celebration, storytelling, and connection — to this collaboration. "The scarf is a wearable celebration," he says, and rightly so. It evokes the feeling of a summer evening where cocktails sparkle in crystal glasses and conversations meander like a favourite old melody — perhaps "All You Need is Love," playing softly in the background. The OG Summer of Love is an invitation — to pause, to sip, to drape, and to delight in the finer things.

Suneet Varma says, "My design philosophy has always been centered on celebration, emotion, and storytelling — values that align beautifully with Tanqueray's legacy of bold flavors and sophistication. This collaboration transcends fashion and spirits."



A Spanish Romantic Thriller that Blossoms in Blood

When murder becomes just another business, you enter the familiar chilling world of Netflix thrillers, writes ABHI SINGHAL

There have many thriller TV series like 'You' that keep you numb and go damn but **The Gardener** is somewhere something different and very gripping created by Miguel Sáez Carral. The TV series is a Spanish thriller streaming on Netflix.

The series opens with a tense scene: Elmer (Álvaro Rico) calmly approaches the sea and murders an unsuspecting swimmer. What follows in the first three episodes is a sequence of brutal killings of innocent people, all orchestrated for monetary gain. At the heart of this darkness is Elmer's mother, La China Jurado (played with unnerving precision by Cecilia Suárez), who manipulates her emotionally void son into becoming a killer-for-hire.

Elmer, traumatised by a childhood car accident, is portrayed as emotionally detached, unable to feel love, guilt or remorse. Álvaro Rico delivers a striking performance, capturing the paradox of a man



Highlights That Make The Gardener Stand Out:

- Unique blend of aesthetic beauty and darkness
- Strong performances, especially from Álvaro Rico and Cecilia Suárez

Reasons The Gardener May Miss the Mark

- Emotionally heavy and morbid themes with cold-blooded murders and emotional detachment
- Predictable family murder drama

wrestling with his emptiness. His stoic expressions and stiff tone give the series its haunting core.

The story gains emotional complexity with the introduction of Violeta (Catalina Sopolana), a gentle nursery school teacher who unwittingly becomes a target for assassination due to a case of mistaken identity. Sopolana brings warmth and vulnerability to the role, serving as the emotional counterbalance to Elmer's coldness. The romantic tension between the two adds a tender, human element to an otherwise dark narrative.

Cecilia Suárez is mesmerising as La China Jurado, a cunning matriarch with a murky past, who hides her criminal empire behind the façade of a garden centre. Her disdain for Violeta injects familiar dramatic tension, reminiscent of

classic soap-style maternal possessiveness. Yet here, it is underscored with a far more sinister undertone.

Perhaps the most disturbing, and oddly poetic, element of the series is the use of the victims' bodies as fertiliser to enrich the garden. It is a macabre metaphor that adds a gothic flourish to the storyline. The garden itself becomes a silent witness to the horrors that unfold, lush, vibrant and fed by death.

The Gardener is a visually striking series, filled with aesthetic scenes of blooming flowers and rich colours, which juxtapose sharply with its grim subject matter. This contrast only heightens the emotional unease, making the viewer question the price of beauty and the cost of love.

In six tightly crafted episodes, The Gardener manages to blend romance, psychological trauma, family drama and crime thriller into a cohesive and deeply unsettling narrative. For fans of shows like You or Dark Desire, this series offers a fresh twist on a common storyline that is beautiful, brutal and strangely hypnotic.



RATING
★★★★

SUGGESTED BINGES



Andor Season 2
OTT - JioHotstar
Cast - Stellan Skarsgård, Genevieve O'Reilly, Adria Arjona, Forest Whitaker



Jewel Thief - The Heist Begins
OTT - Netflix
Cast - Saif Ali Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat, Nikita Dutta, Kunal Kapoor



You Season 5
OTT - Netflix
Cast - Elizabeth Lail, Penn Badgley, Zach Cherry, Charlotte Ritchie



Veera Dheera Sooran
OTT - Amazon Prime Video
Cast - S.J. Suryah, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Dushara Vijayan



Étoile
OTT - Amazon Prime Video
Cast - Luke Kirby, Charlotte Gainsbourg

Get in touch at vivacity@dailypioneer.com

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ADVENTURE

"A person susceptible to 'wanderlust' is not so much addicted to movement as committed to transformation"
— Pico Iyer

When adventure is a way of life!

The Mechukha Adventure Race in Arunachal Pradesh blended high-octane action with national pride, showcasing the region's beauty, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL

The greatest challenge one can face often lies within — confronting and transcending personal limitations. Pushing these boundaries becomes one of the most rewarding experiences life can offer. This notion came to life both figuratively and literally when 22 teams converged in Mechukha for the 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship, a prestigious event under the Adventure Racing World Series — Asia Series.

In a spectacular blend of adrenaline and assertion, Arunachal Pradesh played host to a high — octane adventure race set against the breathtaking backdrop of Mechukha, located in the Shi Yomi district. Spearheaded by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, which aims to place Mechukha firmly on the global adventure sports map, the choice of location was as strategic as it was scenic.

Nestled near the Chinese border on the far eastern edge of India, Mechukha stands not only as a gateway to natural beauty but also as a testament to national pride and resilience. Pasang Dorjee Sona, the Sports Minister of Arunachal Pradesh and the visionary behind the event's conception, expressed his intent with candor and conviction: "This is our way of telling the world — we are here, waiting to be explored. What you'll find here is an India unlike any other. The race is merely a means to draw global attention and unveil this hidden paradise."

His words carry weight, for Mechukha offers boundless opportunities for adventure tourism — from soaring down one of India's longest zip lines and paragliding over pristine valleys, to braving wild rivers through rafting and kayaking, scaling rugged mountain faces, and trekking through untouched landscapes. Set against the backdrop of the Eastern Himalayas, the race included mountain biking, trail running, river rafting, and rappelling — challenging participants across some of the most



rugged and breathtaking terrain in the region. Mechukha, located near the Indo — Tibet border, offered a dramatic and fitting venue, with its raw beauty and strategic significance. The race covered a route that took participants through dense forests, across suspension bridges, over swift rivers, and into remote tribal hamlets, giving them a taste of the unique culture and unspoiled environment that defines Arunachal Pradesh.

Promoting Adventure Tourism

Organised by the state's Department of Tourism in collaboration with Nth adventure the race was a strategic move to boost adventure tourism in the region. Arunachal Pradesh, often referred to as the "Land of the Rising Sun," boasts immense untapped potential for eco and adventure tourism. Pema Khandu, the dynamic Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, is deeply committed to positioning Mechukha and the state as a whole, as a vibrant tourism hub.

"As a border state, we face certain constraints," he noted, "but significant efforts are underway to enhance infrastructure — from roads to telecommunications — which will give a major boost to the tourism industry. Arunachal Pradesh is a peaceful state with 85 percent forest cover, offering visitors a rejuvenating experience amidst nature."

Speaking at the event, Arunachal Pradesh's Tourism Minister emphasised, "This is our home, and we are proud to showcase its beauty and resilience. Adventure tourism is our bridge to the world, and Mechukha is just the beginning."

"It's not just about the race. It's about experiencing India's frontier, the people, the spirit, the message," said a participant from Mumbai.



EXPLORING THE LAST SHANGRI-LA

Nestled in the eastern Himalayas, Mechukha is a pristine valley in the Shi-Yomi district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Often described as the "Last Shangri-La," this enchanting destination remains largely untouched by commercial tourism, offering an unspoiled glimpse into nature, culture, and thrilling adventures.

A TAPESTRY OF NATURAL BEAUTY

Mechukha is a dreamscape of lush meadows, dense pine forests, winding rivers, and majestic mountains. In spring and summer, the valley is blanketed with wildflowers, while autumn offers crisp air and golden hues. Winters, though chilly, transform Mechukha into a white wonderland, with snow-draped landscapes that look like they're lifted straight from a postcard.

ADVENTURE AWAITS

While tranquility is one of Maichuka's charms, the region also promises adrenaline, pumping adventure for thrill seekers.

TREKKING AND HIKING

Mechukha is surrounded by several unexplored trails that cut through dense forests and mountain passes. The Samten Yongcha trek is a favourite among locals, offering panoramic views of the valley. Hikes to nearby ridges reveal sweeping vistas of snow capped peaks and endless forests.

RIVER RAFTING

The Siyom River, though calm in places, also has rapids suitable for white — water rafting, especially during the summer. For the more laid, back adventurer, angling for local fish species in the river is a peaceful pastime.

PARAGLIDING

Mechukha has also become known as a paragliding hotspot, especially during the annual Adventure Festival organised by the Arunachal Pradesh tourism department. Soaring over pine forests and rivers offers a bird's eye view of the valley's breathtaking landscape.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

With its rugged terrain and offbeat tracks, Maichuka is perfect for mountain biking. Whether you're coasting downhill or navigating rocky trails, the combination of fresh air and scenic backdrops makes every ride memorable.



A SUBTLE YET STRONG MESSAGE TO CHINA

China has consistently refused to recognise Arunachal Pradesh as part of India, referring to it as "South Tibet" in its official maps. The Indian government has repeatedly reaffirmed that Arunachal Pradesh is and will always be an integral part of India. By organising a high-profile adventure event in a border village, India sent a quiet but firm message: governance, development, and public participation in the region are thriving. The presence of Indian security forces, civil authorities, and a large number of Indian participants underlined the reality on the ground.



India's 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship came to Arunachal Pradesh for the first time. As part of the prestigious ARWS Asia series, the championship offered an experience that combined intense competition, breathtaking landscapes, and rich cultural immersion. Held in the remote and pristine Mechukha Valley, the event lived up to its promise of providing a race like no other. Nestled high in the Himalayas, 6,000 feet above sea level, Mechukha

welcomed competitors with its untouched beauty. The participants not only faced some of the toughest terrains in the country but also had the chance to immerse themselves in the culture and traditions of the region, discovering the warmth and hospitality of the local tribes, including the Membas, Ramos, Bokars, Libos, and Tagin.

The 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship also served as a qualifier for the ARWS Asia Championship 2025, adding an extra layer

of intensity to the competition. With national and international teams coming together to compete, the event attracted some of the best in the field. In addition to the race, the championship offered a generous cash prize pool of Rs 7 lakh, 5 lakh and 3 lakhs. But beyond the competition, the event allowed participants to fully immerse themselves in Mechukha's rich culture. It was an experience that went far beyond the race itself, offering a deep connection to the land.



THE VEGETARIAN
THALI HAD THE LEBU
PATA BHAAT,
BENGALI ALOO DUM,
CHHOLAR DAL,
GOLDA CHINGRI
MALAI KARI AND
MORE TO ENJOY.



BHURI BHOJ Comes Alive In Delhi

Bringing the stories and spices of Bengal to life, Chef Ananya Banerjee curates an unforgettable menu for the Delhiites, for ten days, that celebrates the region's rich love for the food culture, writes ABHI SINGHAL

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



Chef Ananya Banerjee — The mind and magic behind the creativity and fusion of the Bengali food.

The Bengali culture always makes you feel so alive and the Bengali feast is to die for in the case of food lovers. So, for ten special days, the essence of Bengal will be live at the *The Suryaa, New Delhi* with "Taste of Bengal", that is a grand celebration of food, flavour and nostalgia. The heart behind the entire finger licking food is Chef Ananya Banerjee, whose love for Bengal's food traditions shines through every plate.

The buffet spread showcases an impressive lineup of Bengali classics. Start with *Bhetki Paturi*, where mustard-marinated fish is gently wrapped in banana leaves and pan-fried to perfection. For the savours of the non-vegetarian you can try the ever-popular *Keema Egg Devil*, a favourite from Kolkata's street food scene that wraps

THE SWEETEST GRAND FINALE

The dessert spread is a poetic end to the Bengali feast. You will get to relish the *Makha Shondesh* served in a crisp kunafa basket — soft, kneaded, and delicately sweet. Then, surrender to the charm of *Kheer Komala*, a silky milk pudding laced with fresh oranges and citrus zest. A gentle, flavourful finale that lingers on the palate long after the last bite.

spiced minced meat around a boiled egg, fried until golden and crisp.

In the starters you also have *Ghugni tart* — a contemporary take on Kolkata's classic yellow pea curry, served in a delicate tart shell, *Beetroot Croquette cylinder* — a crisp, deep-fried beetroot and potato croquette with subtle spice, served with delicate garnish. These will not let you keep up the space for the upcoming main course.

The main courses feature the much-loved *Kosha Mangsho*, a slow-cooked mutton dish rich with

spices. Pair it with puffed *Luchi* or the fragrant yellow *Basanti Pulao* for a truly satisfying plate. And for those with a sweet tooth, the *Baked Rasogolla* is a must — a gentle twist on Bengal's iconic sweet that's both comforting and indulgent.

The *Vegetarian Thali* had the *Lebu pata bhaat* — fragrant gobbindobogh rice infused with citrusy gondhoraj leaves for refreshing aroma, *Bengali Aloo Dum* — baby potatoes slow-cooked in lightly spiced tomato cumin. The taste of *Chholar Dal* with Narkel & Kishmish made with thick Bengal gram dal cooked with coconut slivers and sweet raisin will become your favourite eventually.

The desert is the last and the best. You will have the sweetness of *Makha Shondesh* in kunafa basket — Soft, Kneaded Bengali sandesh delicately in a crisp kunafa nest. The *Kheer Komala* — A velvety milk pudding infused with fresh oranges

and citrus zest will make your taste buds feel

weak on food. But this festival is about more than just what is on the plate. *The Suryaa* has turned its dining space into a little slice of Bengal with Live kitchen counters let diners watch dishes come to life, while traditional music adds a soothing background, completing an atmosphere that feels like stepping into a Bengali home.

FACT SHEET -

Taste of Bengal
Where: The Suryaa, New Delhi
When: 25th April - 4th May 2025
Timings: 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM
Price: Dinner Buffet at INR 2399++



From street snacks to heirloom recipes, "Taste of Bengal" brings Kolkata's kitchen to Delhi under the culinary guidance of Chef Ananya. It promises a meal to remember and is an invitation to connect with a part of India that is rich in warmth, tradition, and taste. So, prepare for a nostalgic food journey as The Suryaa.



Passport to World's Street Food



From Tokyo to Mexico, it's a flavourful food world tour at Cafe Delhi Heights, writes ABHI SINGHAL

Street food is an extra happy taste buds experience, a cultural adventure that brings together the flavours and traditions of distant lands. Imagine embarking on a food journey around the globe, all without leaving your seat. With the *International Street Food Festival 2025 at Cafe Delhi Heights*, you can do just that, as this exciting celebration of global cuisine unfolds across all their outlets from April 15 to May 1.

Step into the warm and aesthetic atmosphere of Cafe Delhi Heights, where the scents of sizzling spices, grilling meats, and fresh ingredients fill the

air, setting the stage for a food adventure. The festival's specially formed menu promises to take you on a whirlwind tour across continents, offering a unique twist on iconic street food dishes from around the world.

You can start your journey in Asia with a steaming bowl of Japanese ramen, its rich, savoury broth paired perfectly with tender noodles and a medley of fresh toppings. If you're craving something with a bit of heat, the spicy, tangy kick of Mexican tacos will leave your taste buds dancing. For a touch of Middle Eastern warmth, savour the juicy, flavourful shawarmas, packed with a delicious mix of meats and spices that transport you straight to the bustling streets of Beirut or Cairo.

But the adventure doesn't stop there. Want to travel more? Now, CDH takes you to Spain with a bite of the crispy, sugar-dusted churros, or you can sink teeth into a tender Turkish kebab that captures the essence of Turkey's street food culture. For those who prefer something lighter, the Vietnamese spring rolls offer a refreshing crunch with a burst

of herbs and dipping sauce that's simply irresistible. And for the perfect comfort food, there are American sliders, mini burgers packed with bold flavours that are both familiar and exciting.

The festival adds an interactive twist to the experience with the *Dart World Board* — a fun, paid activity where you throw a dart at a world map that highlights the countries featured in the festival menu. Wherever the dart lands, that's the street food dish you must try. It's an adventurous way to discover new flavours, bringing an element of surprise to your dining experience.

Taste the global street food and something new with the *International Street Food Festival at Cafe Delhi Heights*. Hours of spending time and savouring food will take you through culture, flavour, and the joy of sharing a meal.

FACT SHEET

Location - All Outlets
Café Delhi Heights
Availability - 15th April - 1st May



A Night of Artful Mixology

Bangkok's Rabbit Hole Brings Cocktail Magic to Gurugram at The Leela Ambience, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL



The art of mixology extends far beyond simply combining drinks — it's a creative craft that merges flavour, balance, technique, and storytelling. A superb cocktail is a sensory journey, where each ingredient is selected with intention and precision to evoke a mood, a memory, or an emotion. From the clink of ice to the swirl of citrus oils, mixology is where culinary science meets artistic expression, turning a simple sip into a memorable experience.

In a dazzling display of global mixology, The *Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences* hosted one of Asia's most iconic cocktail destinations for an unforgettable evening. On 23rd April, the celebrated *Rubicon Bar & Cigar Lounge* opened its doors to a special bar takeover by *Rabbit Hole* — Bangkok's legendary speakeasy known for its inventive cocktails and chic, understated charm.

Tucked away behind a nondescript wooden door in Thonglor's vibrant nightlife district, *Rabbit Hole* has earned a reputation for pushing the boundaries of mixology while maintaining a relaxed elegance. For one night only, this distinctive Bangkok spirit was brought to Gurugram, infusing the capital region's cocktail culture with an international flair.

At the heart of the takeover were *Rabbit Hole's* star talents — Depp, the Group Beverage Manager, and Bite, a master mixologist known for

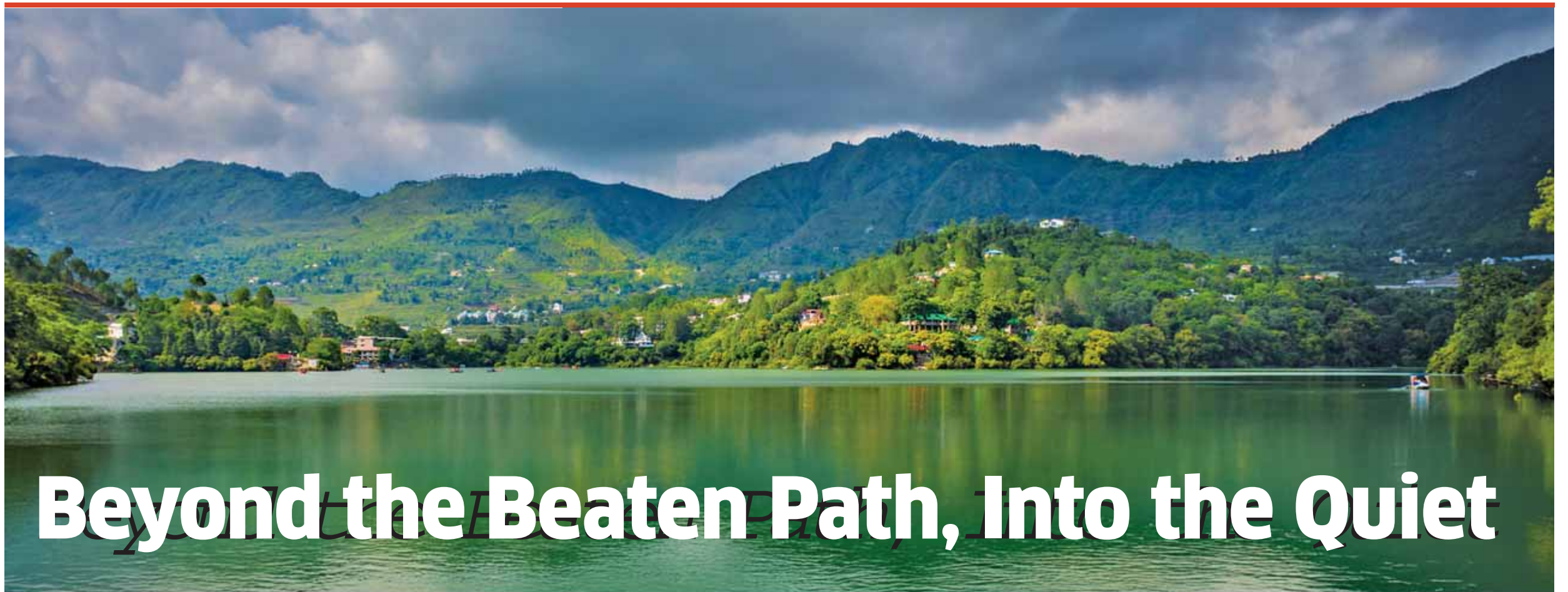
RABBIT HOLE'S SIGNATURE STYLE

Tucked away behind a nondescript wooden door in Thonglor's vibrant nightlife district, *Rabbit Hole* has earned a reputation for pushing the boundaries of mixology while maintaining a relaxed elegance. For one night only, this distinctive Bangkok spirit was brought to Gurugram, infusing the capital region's cocktail culture with an international flair.

his flair, finesse, and storytelling. The duo took over the bar with a menu of meticulously curated cocktails that highlighted their signature creativity, precision, and deep understanding of flavour. Each drink told a story, bridging cultures and delighting the senses of everyone in attendance.

The *Rubicon Bar & Cigar Lounge*, with interiors designed by Japan's renowned *Studio Spin*, provided an opulent yet intimate backdrop for the evening. Featuring rich wood panelling, maroon leather seating, warm ambient lighting, and the refined atmosphere of a private cigar lounge, *Rubicon* served as the perfect stage for *Rabbit Hole's* artistic libations.

This collaboration marks yet another milestone for The *Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences* in its mission to deliver world-class hospitality experiences. By partnering with global tastemakers such as *Rabbit Hole*, the hotel continues to elevate Gurugram's luxury scene, offer-



Beyond the Beaten Path, Into the Quiet

A peaceful getaway in the hills, perfect for relaxing, exploring nature, and enjoying quiet moments

Tucked away in the lush folds of the Kumaon hills lies a lake of nine corners, **Naukuchiyatal** — an emerald secret that still shimmers in its serenity, away from the better-trodden paths of Nainital and Bhimtal.

And now, it has a luxurious new address: Naukuchia House, a recently renovated 42 — room property by the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), the custodians of the iconic Taj brand.

Standing elegantly by the lake, Naukuchia House is not just a hotel — it's a sanctuary. Designed with understated charm and heritage echoes, the property offers panoramic lake views, with a private entry that takes you straight to the shimmering waters. Step out of your room, and you can hop directly onto a boat. I did. A slow ride in the morning mist, a fishing line tossed casually into the glassy lake surface — this isn't just vacationing; it's soul-deep unwinding.

For those chasing rejuvenation rather than adventure, I recommend their signature full-body spa therapy. My masseur was a magician with years of training in her fingertips, and the steam bath that followed was the kind of cleansing city souls long for.

But Naukuchia House doesn't stop there. On one of the afternoons, the hotel arranged a guided walk into the forest, leading to an enchanting village clearing where warm tea and quiet conversations replaced Wi-Fi signals and screens.

And then there's **Kainchi Dham** — just a scenic 30-minute drive away. This modest ashram has turned into a magnetic spiritual hub, drawing global figures like **Mark Zuckerberg**, **Julia Roberts**, and closer to home, **Virat Kohli** and **Anushka Sharma**.

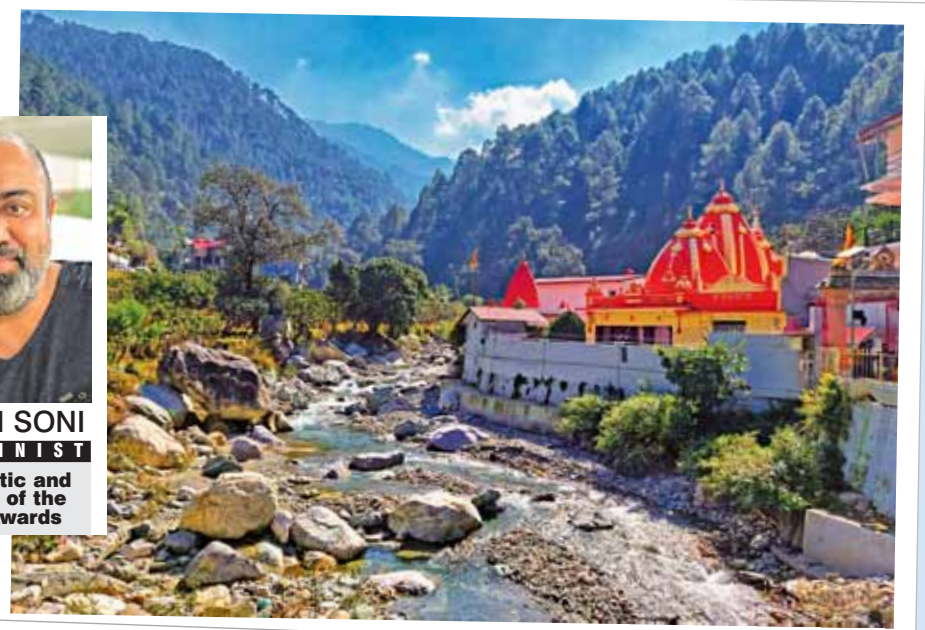
Whether you're a believer or a curious wanderer, the calm of **Shri Neem Karoli Baba's** temple will stay long after you leave. Back at the hotel, there's plenty to indulge in. The temperature — controlled pool makes a dip possible even when the air gets crisp.

The food?

Their Asian fare is well-balanced, and the Indian kebabs-succulent, smoky, and served with Himalayan charm-are memorable. A chef's nod to modern tastes without losing sight of tradition at **Ija**, their all — day dining restaurant that means 'Mother' in Kumaoni, is worth a praise. **Naukuchiyatal** is just 5.5 hours by road from Delhi, making it ideal for a 2-3 night escape. Unlike its over-touristed cousins, it offers silence, stars, and stories. And with **Naukuchia House** now writing its own, there's never been a better time to visit.



PAWAN SONI
COLUMNIST
Food critic and founder of the Big F Awards



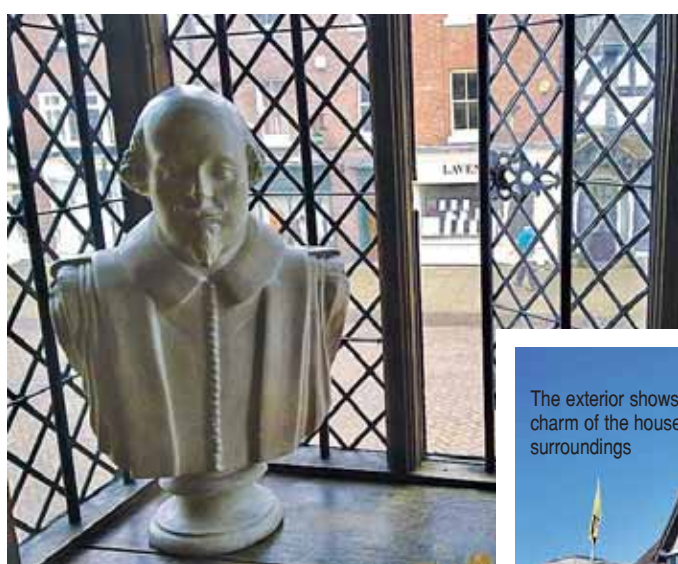
REJUVENATION

Naukuchiyatal Lake, with its nine serene corners, offers peaceful boating and fishing. Nearby, **Kainchi Dham** — home to **Shri Neem Karoli Baba** — draws seekers and celebrities alike for its calm, spiritual aura. Surrounded by pine forests and misty hills, the lake is a hidden gem for nature lovers. Birdwatchers often flock here to spot rare Himalayan species in the tranquil surroundings. Cozy homestays and lakeside cafés add charm to the quiet retreat.



NOT TO MISS

The Kumaoni thali is a flavourful ode to the hills. It features **aloo ke gutke**, **lahsuni palak** and hearty **gehat dal**, paired with the region's signature **lal bhaat**. The tangy Kumaoni raita and spicy **bhaang ki chutney** add layers of taste. For meat lovers, there's tender chicken and a rich **shikari mutton curry**. The meal ends with a comforting bowl of rice **kheer** — soulful and satisfying.



BY SEEMA ANAND CHOPRA

Trying to take a step backwards into history, on a cool September autumn afternoon I stood looking at the birthplace of Shakespeare and wondered what it was that had drawn me here at this time of the year.

It is just another English house, but for its resident who made it extraordinary — this was home to one of the greatest English writers who hold a universal appeal. His plays and poems continue, till times today, to entice readers and audiences, transcending borders of countries and languages. Undoubtedly, this celebrated author is remembered even after 450 years, for his literary works have proudly, since ages, been imbibed in most school and university syllabuses. So, I went visiting the English town of Stratford-upon-Avon where the historic and skilfully restored house of William Shakespeare is located.

Shakespeare's Birthplace Museum

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust was founded in 1847, almost three centuries after his birth, and has been able to preserve his legacy and the five Tudor houses associated with Shakespeare's lifetime. By the 19th century, the house had decayed and was falling apart, but the timely restoration attempts by the famous writer — **Charles Dickens**, helped to save it. He organised performances in towns of England to raise funds to renovate the memorial house! We gathered this information and a lot more at the vivid, engrossing Shakespeare Museum, through which is the entry to Shakespeare's birthplace!

Footsteps in the Halls of Genius

A literary journey in an English town unites two voices across continents and centuries

The exterior shows the historic charm of the house and its surroundings



Shakespeare's Birthplace

Subsequently, we reached Shakespeare's birthplace, which is quite lively with radiant colours welcoming all who enter it, echoing the lifestyle of the 16th century. Shakespeare lived here with his parents and many more brothers and sisters. The par-

lour, hall, workshop, bedrooms and the furnishings have been reinstated too.

Also noteworthy is Shakespeare's bedchamber and birthing room from the year 1564, recreated to perfection! We were informed that he sometimes wrote the description of his personal domestic items, furniture etc. in his plays, which has helped the restoration work to a great extent!

Discovery in the Gardens

In the 16th century, the garden of the house was used for various purposes by Shakespeare's father — like wool-dealing activities, glove-making, growing vegetables, herbs and medicinal plants, a barn for pigs, hens and more and also as a storage area. Wandering through one of the five gardens attached to Shakespeare's house, we made a discovery that added excitement to our visit and it was an icon of a true tribute to the 'Voice of India'.

AU REVOIR

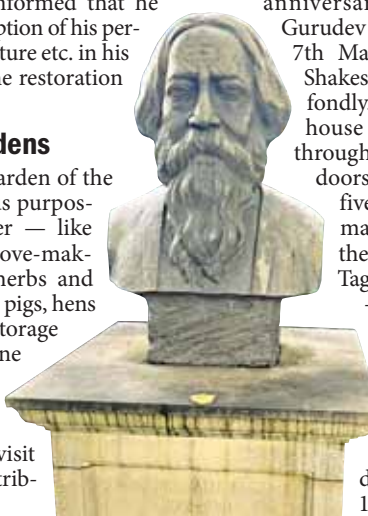
It's amazing how such a humble space gave rise to one of the greatest writers ever. Quiet but meaningful. The setting adds to the magic — it's like the whole street tells a story. We drove back with memories of two great poets and writers — **William Shakespeare** and **Rabindranath Tagore**, born centuries and continents apart, yet brought together by little effort and fate at Shakespeare's Birthplace! No wonder that **Rabindranath Tagore** is referred to as the Shakespeare of India! **Rabindranath Tagore's** birth anniversary — 7th May is celebrated annually at Shakespeare's Birthplace by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.



Shakespeare's House on Henley Street. This timber — framed house is where Shakespeare was born

Tagore at Shakespeare's Birthplace

On the occasion of the upcoming birth anniversary of Nobel Laureate **Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore** on 7th May, I recall my visit to Shakespeare's Birthplace House fondly. After the Shakespeare house tour, we stepped out through one of the back exit doors, wandered through its five gardens attached to the main house, and spotted the bust of **Rabindranath Tagore** — the great Indian poet and writer — it stood there majestically, as a true homage to him. We were at a quiet garden corner of the house and there it was — a fine sculpture on a stone plinth carved with Tagore's poem to Shakespeare, which he wrote on the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death — completion of 300 years in 1916 — titled 'In Honour of William



Shakespeare's Birthing Room. A small, modest room believed to be where Shakespeare was born

Shakespeare'. In the poem, he praises Shakespeare as an English poet as well as a world poet — an accolade to Shakespeare's work that inspired Tagore's literary work too! Little did he envision that less than 50 years later, the poem would be back in the limelight when the Calcutta Art Society presented an ivory tablet of the poem at the newly opened Shakespeare Centre in 1964!

— The author is a travel writer and researcher



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

As your work life blooms this week, be careful not to neglect personal connections due to your sharpened wit and a plethora of advanced ideas coming to the forefront. Your productivity becomes an asset, but may trigger feelings of emotional neglect from family and loved ones if left unbalanced. Mid-week could present chances to represent your organization or to travel for business after an initial period of basking in neglect from other employees, so try remaining vigilant around opposing coworkers as envy may lead others to seize the credit you rightfully deserve. Such ventures are bound to guarantee success and return value as they will serve to improve your standing and reputation in the organization.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Midnight Blue
Lucky day Tuesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Possibly this week, you might feel pulled toward a more flexible and unusual way of going about your life. A valuable lesson comes from this sign, and it is that you possess freedom of your choices, all the reason to unapologetically choose the route you want irrespective of what others think. But at the same time, freedom seeking ambition might lead you to careless attitude, particularly when it comes to work matters. This could cause friction with authority and limit your progress or acknowledgement in the workplace. In any case, the solution lies in staying resolute and decluttered. As you make greater plans, try to bear in mind that fulfillment in achievements arises from consistent effort as well as the right intention.

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour Ocean Blue
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

In the first two days, you might feel mentally drained and have a hard time making decisions. This conflict inside of you could cause tension and anxiety. As a means for relief, you might look to art, books, or even some religious texts. You actively seek people, and thus, become very social, as relationships become the new focus. A person's balance of intuitive and wise actions is very active at this time. The middle of the week is marked with solitude which can help provide an aid to personal reflection. This self-enlightenment is zen-like and very deep at this point. By the end of the week, there are some thrilling prospects waiting for you such as starting a new business, changing jobs, or even new developments in the family.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Thursday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

In the area of career and family, this week may present more challenges than usual. Disputes and misunderstandings may crop up among your colleagues, and interpersonal relationships may become even more strained. Remember to remain calm and to seek refuge from volatile confrontations. Calmly reflect on your behavior and attempt to approach the affected issues constructively. It is very likely that your energy and confidence will suffer a downturn in mid-week. Attending to personal health and relaxation is vital during this period. Greater insight could be derived from a consultation with a medical professional. By the week's end, a gradual improvement will be noticed. Personal matters, along with financial issues, will begin resolving and confidence will return gradually. Engaging in spiritual activities will aid in attaining tranquility and achieving equilibrium.

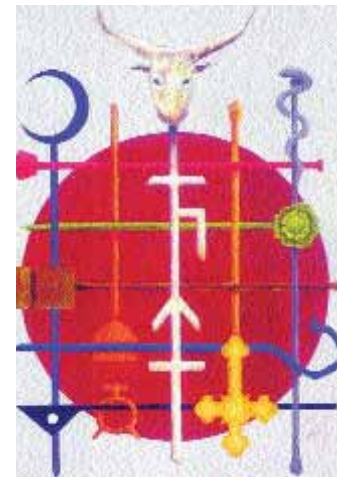
Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Copper
Lucky day Thursday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

In matters of love and even in your profession, the week starts with some disappointments along with missed opportunities. You might feel lonely or alone in a crowd which rises from an underlying dissatisfaction. For those already in relationships, work obligations may entail unscheduled absences from one's loves. However, midweek brings a change of pace. A new business venture or an increase in income might be on the way. An assignment may have been given to you and your success will depend on how hard you work and commit yourself. Towards the end of the weekend, you should watch your temper which may lead to rage, or you falling into some emotional temptation that alters your sense of judgment. You can greatly benefit from paying attention to your subconscious through dreaming, remaining within the boundaries of logical and rational aspirations.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Friday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Get ready for the week because you will feel an extreme level of happiness and satisfaction this week. Everything from your emotional state, health, and finances will bring deep fulfillment and satisfaction. You will be able to achieve everything you want while being grateful. You will start receiving better health and will feel more at ease during your day to day activities. All the burdens that felt impossible to overcome before will now seem like an easy task. From a personal point of view, you will receive lots of warmth and support from your family which underscores the importance of true love. Be grateful for the affection you do get, as it provides great strength. The reality you construct during this week will turn into a source of great strength and success in the long run.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

The clarity that you gain during this period will help you to navigate smoothly through any challenges converting negativity into positivity, and not the other way around. Instead of avoiding your difficulties, open yourself towards a new and deeper pursuit that is sustainable deep-rooted in lasting happiness and fulfillment. You may experience emotional struggles or physical imbalances, but learn to ride their wave instead of trying to stifle them. Release any attachments to the past and focus entirely on resolving conflicts within yourself in the present moment. By the end of the week, a decision, probably yours, will restore clarity on travel or family issues. Expect holistic healing on a mental and physical level as the week closes.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Your determination, along with other factors this week, is sure to guide you to achieving all of your set goals. Embracing the strong focus is sure to yield inviting results. Turning those dreams into achievements is going to be a walk in the park now. Growth would be accompanied with opportunities in family or new endeavors. Towards the middle of the week, your memories are bound to wash over you like a wave alongside old friends or places which hold value bringing joy and happiness into your life. By the end of the week, focus from the outside world transforms into the inner self allowing an equilibrium shift to be attained via meditation, spiritual reflection, or simple prayer leading your introspective thought.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Mint
Lucky day Saturday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week, your initiative and ability to lead are reasonably high. You become the source of strength for others, offering help and assistance where it is needed. You show great affection and might need to be a bit loving at times to set the right balance. You may get an impetus of some sort in the middle of the week which can stir some conflict or argument of sorts. You will want things settled your way and even though this isn't physical battle, it can feel like an emotional one. Either way, in this period of time, you won't be moved, focusing instead on everything sound and put together. No matter Ma, there are always mixed results and in this case, your capability of noticing every single detail will make it easier for you to make money. You stay safe with your wit.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Lime
Lucky day Monday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Feeling apprehensive and fearful of what others think could dominate your life this week. This may also lead to internal conflict and self-doubt. Unproductive conversations that can spiral into useless confrontations are also a possibility. Although it may seem like others are the issue, the real struggle is within yourself. In this case, you need to work on forgiving yourself which will help you channel your energy towards these unconstructive conflicts. With a positive attitude, success can be attained. The beginning of the week will allow you to feel motivated and strong achieving goals. If there is anything that needs to be worked on, now is the time to put in the effort with the extra energy to attain them.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Fuchsia
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, you will lead with your natural ability to be a strong marker of confidence and attract all sorts of positive attention. The week will start off with your desires being fulfilled, and a feeling of satisfaction will also accompany you as you experience the joy of family and new beginnings. You would feel an inner calmness and sense of calm after an important life cycle is finished. This would allow you to rest and enjoy the moment. However, some outdated beliefs or practices stemming from the past may be hindering your growth so do remember this. With this in mind, new perspectives that positively change your life are a must here. By the end of the week, strive to be neutral about challenges; exercise clear judgment, unwavering integrity, and strongly articulate elements of your truth.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week begins with a powerful urge towards spiritual development, driving you toward seeking enlightenment. You may find peace in meditative techniques like prayer and even participate in group spiritual activities. Enjoying your own company brings calm and quite moment, reflecting back towards your milestones, and accepting the efforts you have put in. In projects like constructing a house, there is a feeling of closure. The joy that comes from family get-togethers and other celebrations will be significant, and relationships including those with spouses will deepen through understanding, caring, and affection. Along with these, this week contains chances of buying movable or immovable assets which combine external achievements with internal satisfaction. This enlightening journey will be taken with the guidance and support of elders. During this period, embrace the phase that brings ample growth.

Lucky number 15 | Lucky colour Lilac
Lucky day Sunday

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

THOUGHTFUL INSIGHTS



Dr. Tanu Jain

While destiny may chart the broad course, confusion is often a creation of our own minds. I eventually understood — clarity is not external; it's the power of one's inner being

Dilemmas and Decision-Making in the Pursuit of Life

How often do we find ourselves at the crossroads of decision-making — hesitant, confused, or gripped by the fear of making the wrong choice? The mind echoes with questions: Am I doing the right thing? What if this backfires? Would life have been better if I had chosen the other path?

These are not rare thoughts. Many of us revisit decisions, wishing we had taken more time or acted differently. But then again, is the course of our life truly in our hands? Or are we being gently steered by the unseen currents of divine will?

While destiny may chart the broad course, confusion is often a creation of our own minds. In one of my encounters, I met a respected justice, a spiritually inclined man with decades of experience in law. I asked him earnestly, "Sir, how do you make such critical decisions about others' lives without hesitation or emotional burden?"

He smiled and replied, "I have never had a problem making decisions. My mind is clear, and I have no biases. I serve my duty with sincerity, and that anchors me."

That statement lingered with me for days. How could someone remain untouched by the emotional weight of decision-making? I eventually understood — clarity is not external; it's the power of one's inner being. His spiritual grounding and absence of personal attachment gave him freedom from confusion. He had transcended personal likes, dislikes, and ambitions. His work was not a job, it was his dharma —



his sacred duty.

The spiritual texts speak deeply about this inner clarity:

"Yada te moha-kalilam buddhir vyatitarishyati, tada gantasi nirvedam shrotavyasya shrutasya cha."

— Bhagavad Gita 2.52

"When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard."

This verse emphasises that clarity comes

when the fog of delusion lifts — when ego, attachment, and fear no longer influence your thoughts. So, what really brings that clarity?

Clear Priorities is the Key

Confusion creeps in when we are torn between our personal attachments and our responsibilities. When your priorities are aligned with your higher purpose — not temporary pleasures or emotional biases — decisions become smooth.

"Na karmanam anarambhan naikarmyam puruso'snute"

— Bhagavad Gita 3.4

"One does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from work; nor does one reach perfection merely by renunciation." The key lies in understanding your role and walking it without ego or expectation.

Mental Clarity Through Devotion

When the mind is purified through sadhana — dedicated spiritual practice, service, and sincerity — clarity arises naturally. Decisions are no longer a burden; they become expressions of your inner purpose.

No Favourites, No Bias is a Blessing

When you stop playing favourites — be it people, outcomes, or even ambitions — you rise above confusion.

"Udaasina-vadaaseeno gunair yo na vichaalyate"

— Bhagavad Gita 14.23

"He who remains like one unconcerned, unshaken by the modes of nature — such a person gains peace."

Seeing Work as Worship Finally Leads to

Liberation

When your office, your duty, your contribution to the world becomes your tapasya (austerity), then your entire being aligns with it. Work stops being a burden. It becomes seva — sacred service.

In the end, life will always present us with choices. The roads may diverge, dilemmas may arise, and uncertainty may knock on our doors time and again.

But when we are anchored in purpose, detached from outcome, and aligned with our inner truth, the fog clears.

True clarity is not about always knowing the right answer — it's about being so rooted in your dharma that even the toughest choices feel light. It is the silence of the soul, not the noise of the world, that guides the wisest decisions.

As the Upanishads remind us:

"Dharmam chara, satyam vada"

— Taaittiriya Upanishad

"Walk the path of righteousness; speak the truth."

When decisions come from a place of truth, integrity, and surrender, even the unknown becomes sacred.

You may not always control the path, but you can choose to walk it with clarity, devotion, and grace. And in doing so, you don't just make decisions — you shape your destiny.

— The author's views are personal. The author is a civil servant at the Ministry of Defence and a spiritual speaker