



Dhami Govt maintaining demographic & cultural identity of U'khand: BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The State government has fulfilled its promises, particularly in maintaining the demographic and cultural identity of Uttarakhand. This was stated by the Bharatiya Janata Party spokesman Suresh Joshi in a Press conference held on Friday to mark the three years of the State government. He highlighted the government's achievements and policy implementations. Joshi stated that the imple-

ment of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), a strict anti-conversion law, an anti-riot law and a land law were among the major steps taken during this period. These measures, according to the party, have led to the removal of encroachments from 1,44,500 acres of

land and the closure of several unregistered madarsas. "The government also introduced a stringent land law, preventing non-residents from purchasing agricultural land in hill regions. This was aimed at addressing concerns about land ownership in rural areas. For women's empowerment, the government has provided 30 per cent reservation in government jobs and 33 per cent in cooperative societies. Schemes such as

Work on water conservation and rejuvenation of streams: Dhami

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that work is needed on a major scale for conservation of natural sources of water. He said that emphasis should be laid on water conservation and rejuvenation of the streams. The CM said this while reviewing the game changer schemes of Irrigation, Micro Irrigation and Rural Construction departments at the State secretariat on Friday.

He said that water is the basis of life and prosperity so consistent efforts should be made for water conservation and rejuvenation of the streams.

The CM also directed that the officers should expedite the work on the drainage plan of different cities.

The officers informed the CM that work on the Jamrani dam multipurpose project will be completed before March 2025. This project is estimated to cost about Rs 3,638 crore and out of which a sum of Rs 678 crore is already spent. The work on the Song dam project is also underway and is expected to be completed before March 2023.

In the meeting the CM



Dhami said that the Irrigation and Micro Irrigation departments along with the municipal corporations should work in coordination to enable rainwater harvesting in the urban areas. He said that special focus should be laid on groundwater recharge and innovations.

The CM directed that work on the Jamrani and Song dam projects should be expedited. He said that drainage related issues should be solved and work for construction of check dams should be done.

The CM directed the departments concerned to ensure that maximum benefit of the irrigation canals should be made.

directed the Irrigation department to organise a meeting with officers of the Mining department for removing silt from the rivers and reservoirs.

The meeting was attended by the vice chairman of State Infrastructure Monitoring Council, Vishwas Dawar, chief secretary Radha Raturi, additional chief secretary Anand Bardhan, principal secretary R Meenakshi Sundaram, secretary Vinay Shankar Pandey and additional chief executive officer of Centre for Public Policy and Good Governance (CPPGG), Uttarakhand Manoj Pant and others.

Congress seeks resignations of VS speaker and BJP State president

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Emboldened by the resignation of cabinet minister Prem Chand Aggarwal, the Uttarakhand Congress has now trained its guns on the Vidhan Sabha speaker Ritu Khanduri Bhusan and the Bharatiya Janata Party State president Mahendra Bhatt.

Addressing media persons at the headquarters of the State Congress on Friday, the leader of opposition in Vidhan Sabha Yashpal Arya said that the use of abusive language by the Parliamentary Affairs minister inside the house was unprecedented and shocking. He said that the Speaker is the guardian of the house during Vidhan Sabha session and she should have immediately intervened when the minister was speaking and should have expunged

the derogatory comment from the record of the proceedings. Arya said that both speaker and leader of the house who was also present in the house were only listeners when Aggarwal was insulting the people. He said that when the first time MLA Lakshpat Butola tried to put his views on the issue, the behaviour of the speaker was incomprehensible and objectionable. He said that the BJP State president Bhatt used the word Sadak Chaap for the agitators who demonstrated in Gairsain. Arya said that Bhatt should explain the meaning of Sadak- Chaap. He said that action should also be taken against the speaker and Bhatt. Taking exception to the silence of senior leaders of BJP on the issue, the LOP said that it shows that the entire episode

which occurred inside Vidhan Sabha was a deliberate ploy of BJP. The BJP leadership wants to divide the State by fanning the divisive politics of Pahad and Maidan. Former speaker Gobind Singh Kunjwal said that speaker is a constitutional post and one holding the chair should act above the party lines. He said that the current speaker takes part in the membership campaign of BJP and attends the programmes of the party. Kunjwal said that such activities are against the prestige of the chair she is holding. He also questioned the behaviour of the speaker when she reprimanded MLA Butola when he objected to the abusive language used by minister Aggarwal.

Cong starts two-day training session

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

A two-day training session of Uttarakhand Congress for its district and Mahanagar presidents and heads of ancillary organisations of the State started at Shahanshai Ashram in Dehradun on Friday. The party's national chairman (Training), Sachin Rao imparted training to the participants in the programme. He focussed on taking the ideology of the Congress party to the people and working on the public issues. In his presentation Rao said that effective work on local and regional issues should be done by the Congressmen. He listed points on the analysis of the results of the past elections and strategy for the upcoming elections.



He told trainees about the best practices which have helped people. Rao said that the workers should be alert for ensuring that the names of eligible voters are added to the voter list. The Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Karan Mahara, member of

Congress Working Committee (CWC) Gurdip Singh Sappal, State co-in-charge Surendra Sharma, Leader of Opposition in Vidhan Sabha Yashpal Arya and other senior leaders of the party also attended the programme.

Bankers should ensure safe, convenient and effective digital banking: Jawalkar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Finance secretary Dilip Jawalkar said that bankers should ensure that people get safe, convenient and effective digital banking facilities. He was presiding over a meeting of the State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) at the State secretariat on Friday.

The secretary said that the banks having low Cash Deposit (CD) ratio should prepare an effective monitoring plan to increase their CD ratio. He said that the issues of electricity and net connectivity should be addressed for safe and effective digital banking.

Jawalkar said that the Banking Mitras should meet more and more people, solve their issues and facilitate them. He said that like government and cooperative banks the corporate banks should also make the general public aware on digital banking.



The secretary directed the committee to coordinate with UPCL, BSNL and UREDA to bring remaining 10 villages within the umbrella of banking services in the State.

The SLBC assistant general manager Rajiv Pant informed that the CD ratio of State has increased by one per cent from September 2024 to December 2024.

He informed that till

December 31, 2024, 38,95,316 banks accounts were covered under PMJDY while 41,07,249 accounts were covered under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

Additional secretary Abhishek Rohilla, NABARD assistant general manager Navin Kumar, Reserve Bank of India assistant general manager Dhiraj Kumar Arora and representative of different banks attended the meeting.

Over 1,300 people attend DM's multipurpose camp in Tyuni

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Dehradun district magistrate Savin Bansal visited the Tyuni area of the district and chaired a multipurpose camp which was attended by over 1,300 people on Friday, officials said. Besides this, 28 government departments had also set up stalls which provided information and access to welfare schemes and addressed grievances of locals.

The officials informed that Jagatram and his son Sumit, who are 50 per cent disabled, had been struggling for a long time to obtain a disability certificate and pension. When the matter was brought to the DM's attention, their disability certificates were issued immediately and the necessary formalities for

their pension were completed on-site. A woman named Durga Devi had an outstanding electricity bill of Rs 18,000. She informed the DM that her husband had passed away last year and she was supporting her five children by working as a labourer. Unaware of the pending bill, she sought its waiver.

The DM directed the Tehsildar of Tyuni to clear the bill using the relevant funds. Another resident Pramila Devi sought financial assistance due to damage to her house. After listening to her request, the DM ordered immediate action and a financial assistance check was issued to her on the spot through the Tyuni Tehsil office. Two differently-abled children

Ravina (16) and Kartik (11) were also granted approval for financial assistance under the sponsorship scheme. They will receive Rs 4,000 per month for their education.

The social welfare officer and district probation officer were instructed to complete the necessary formalities. Villagers from Banadhar requested the DM to extend the gas distribution vehicle service to their village, as it currently reaches only Chilhad, four kilometers away. Bansal approved the request and a gas distribution point was established in Banadhar. He also appealed to people to take maximum benefit of the government's welfare schemes.

Kumar orders survey of Haridwar's municipal wards to ascertain quantity of garbage collection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Haridwar

After assuming charge recently as the municipal commissioner of Haridwar, Nandan Kumar has directed that a survey should be undertaken in all the wards of the Municipal Corporation of Haridwar (MCH) to ascertain how much garbage is being collected from each ward. Chairing a meeting with sanitation inspectors and other officials concerned on Friday, he also directed them to ensure that garbage is collected daily on time and that challans are imposed on those found littering. Kumar further said that immediate action should be taken in case there is a

transportation issue in lifting garbage from any area.

The municipal commissioner directed the officials to conduct a survey of all the municipal wards to ascertain the quantity of garbage being collected from each ward. This will help the corporation to make the sanitation service more effective and enable it to make a more effective plan to procure vehicles and other resources, he said. Assistant municipal commissioner Ravindra Dayal and other officials of the MCH were also present in the meeting.

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 7C, Awast, Vikas, Ground Floor, Delhi Road, Haridwar- 249407

PUBLIC NOTICE-TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
(See proviso to Rule 8(i))
Notice for sale of immovable asset(s)

E-Auction Sale Notice for the sale of immovable asset(s) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

This notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on 'As is where is', 'As is what is' and 'Whatever there is' as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/Co-Borrowers/Guarantors/Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mr Hari Gopal (Borrower), Guddi Devi (Co-Borrower) LBHWR00005551105	Plot No 23, Khasra No 370, Situated At Ward No 59 Sitapur, Gram Jawalapur, (Inside Nagar Nigam), Pargana Jawalapur, Tehsil And District Haridwar, Uttarakhand. Area: 1180 Sq Ft.	Rs 25,41,652/- as on March 15, 2025.	Rs. 17,00,000/- Rs. 1,70,000/-	April 03, 2025 From 12:00 Noon to 01:00 PM	April 15, 2025 From 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

The online auction will be conducted on the website (URL Link-<https://www.disposalhub.com>), of our auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited The Mortgagees/Notices are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest by April 11, 2025 before 05:00 PM else the secured asset(s) will be sold as per schedule.

The prospective bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, 7C, Awast, Vikas, Ground Floor, Delhi Road, Haridwar- 249407 on or before April 11, 2025 before 05:00 PM. Thereafter, they have to submit their offer through the website mentioned above on or before April 11, 2025 before 05:00 PM along with the scanned image of the Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. In case the prospective bidder(s) is/are unable to submit his/ her/ their offer through the website, then the signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, 7C, Awast, Vikas, Ground Floor, Delhi Road, Haridwar- 249407 on or before April 11, 2025 before 05:00 PM Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of 'ICICI Bank Limited' payable at Haridwar.

For any further clarifications in terms of inspection, Terms and Conditions of the E-Auction or submission of tenders, contact ICICI Bank Employee Phone No. 9327730494/8584874809

Please note that the Marketing agencies 1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited, 2. Augoe Assets Management Private Limited 3. Matex Net Pvt. Ltd., 4. Firwin Estate Deal Technologies Pvt Ltd 5. Ginarsoft Pvt Ltd 6. Hecta Prop Tech Pvt Ltd 7. Arca Emart Pvt Ltd 8. Novel Asset Service Pvt Ltd 9. Nobroker Technologies Solutions Pvt Ltd 10. Valuetrust Capital Services Pvt Ltd have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed Terms and Conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date: March 21, 2025
Place: Dehradun (Haridwar)

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

CBC 25113/12/10179/2425

Humanism and the world

The human race stands at a critical juncture, where its unchecked expansion and relentless exploitation of the natural world threaten its own survival. The pressing need to amend Protagoras' aphorism "Man is the measure of all things" has never been more urgent

FIRST Column



has increased sharply as a result of growing human population, which, currently around 8.2 Billion, is, pace UN projections, set to peak at 10.3 Billion by the mid-1980s. According to another estimate, it is expected to exceed 10 Billion by 2060. It is not just their sustenance demands that are increasing with their numbers. Market capitalism, with advertising as its cutting edge, is manufacturing demands for ever new consumer goods and leisure activity.



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

The result is pressure on nature, resources and space. Animal habitats and forests, for example, are destroyed to make room for townships, factories and roads, and rail lines linking them. Trees are cut en masse to provide for construction, firewood and the furniture industry. Not surprisingly, Ian Johnston's report in The Independent of the United Kingdom of 31 May, 2017, cited scientists writing in a special edition of the magazine, Nature, that humans were causing the sixth mass extinction of life on earth. Chris Jasurek's piece in The Epoch Times of October 31, 2018, cites a World Wildlife Fund report as stating that humans have killed about

60 per cent of animals on the planet since 1970. The future of humans themselves is at stake. Population increase is an important cause of accelerating human activity. Referring to the soaring increase in global population under way, Desmond Morris predicts in *The Naked Ape: A Zoologist's Study of the Human Animal*, that time will come when "the densities we are now experiencing in our major cities would exist in every corner of the globe. The consequences of all this for all forms of wild animals is obvious. The effect it would have on our own species is equally depressing."

Morris adds shortly thereafter, "Long before our populations reach the levels envisaged above we shall have broken so many of the rules that govern our biological nature, that we shall have collapsed as a dominant species. Many exciting species have become extinct in the past and we are no exception." Those dismissing Morris' prediction as alarmist can argue that the human mind, which accounts not only for the survival of the species but its dominance over nature through technology, will find a way of preventing this. Nothing of the sort. Technology would remain a formulation on paper if the environment in which it has to be applied disappears.

More important, the devising and application of technologies would require continued and

serious application of the mind. Paul Shepard writes in *Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence*, "the mind and its organ, the brain, are in reality that part of us most dependent on the survival of animals. We are connected to animals by sinews that link speech to rationality, insight, intuition, and consciousness." He states that people everywhere had "a profound, inescapable need for animals" which "are used in the growth and development of the human person, in those most priceless qualities which we lump together as 'mind.' Animal images and forms play a critical role in the shaping of personality, identity, and social consciousness. Animals are among the first inhabitants of the mind's eye. They are "basic to the development of speech and thought."

The progressive extinction of species will have a devastating effect on the human mind, and a progressive decline of the mind will have its own disastrous consequences. The mind is the home of reason and consciousness. As the basis of analytical thought, reason is the cutting edge of the mind.

Its possession has enabled humankind to create a civilisation tailored to cater to its needs, fancies and craving for luxuries, and based on the exploitation of all other species, who are considered inferior as they do not have the ability to reason. The argument will, of course, be that reason would enable people to recognise the deadly consequence of their way of life and retreat from the brink of the precipice.

Such optimism is unwarranted. Reason is an instrument, and not humankind's defining attribute, and is often overpowered by passion and the urge for self-indulgence. The consequences of global warming and what is to be done to combat it are well known. Yet people are unable to overcome the growing desire for creature comforts, which is so overwhelming that they are incapable of jettisoning it. Many now join the Taliban or other groups whose obscurantist doctrines do not stand rational interrogation—as many in Nazi Germany joined the Sturm Abteilung (SA) and the Schultz Staffein (SS) steeped in Hitler's racist doctrine. If the first instance reflects the failure of rationality, the second indicates the triumph of hatred over reason. Not many today realise that their human supremacist worldview and ruthless exploitation of non-human living beings is facilitating their own extinction. Instead of killing, they need to nurture and cherish all animals, birds, fish and plants. The second amendment to Protagoras' aphorism should transform it to read, "Humankind is the preserver and protector of all beings."

(The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. Views expressed are personal)

Himachal factors in growth aspirations amid fiscal challenges

Phishing scams: Protect yourself from cyber threats!

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who also oversees the finance portfolio, recently presented the 2025-26 state budget, aiming to balance fiscal prudence with developmental aspirations. The budget emphasises tourism expansion, green energy, and rural upliftment as key growth drivers. However, persistent financial challenges—including declining central grants, rising debt, and increasing revenue expenditure—continue to pose significant hurdles to fiscal management.

state must focus on:

Expanding the tax base: Increasing the number of taxpayers through effective registration drives and stricter enforcement of tax laws.

Digital tax governance: Implementing advanced digital tracking systems to monitor tax collections, curb evasion, and streamline compliance.

Rationalising tax incentives: Reviewing and eliminating unnecessary tax exemptions that lead to revenue losses.

Strengthening enforcement: Enhancing audit mechanisms to detect tax evasion while promoting voluntary compliance.

Rationalising subsidies

Himachal Pradesh bears a high subsidy burden, which, while essential for social welfare, often leads to fiscal strain when not managed effectively. A targeted subsidy framework is necessary to balance welfare with financial sustainability. Key measures include:

Identifying non-essential subsidies: Phasing out benefits that primarily aid economically well-off sections while protecting critical subsidies for health-care, education, and agriculture.

1. Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT): Ensuring subsidies reach intended beneficiaries directly, reducing middlemen and leakages.

2. Performance-based subsidies: Linking benefits to efficiency and sustainability, particularly in the power sector, where leakages are common.

3. Encouraging alternative funding models: Exploring Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partnerships to support social welfare initiatives.

By curbing wasteful subsidies, the government can reallocate resources to productive investments, fostering long-term economic stability.

Monetising state assets

Himachal Pradesh possesses vast underutilised assets in land, tourism, hydroelectricity, and public infrastructure. Monetising these resources can generate substantial revenue.

a) Land monetisation: Leasing state-owned land for commercial and industrial use while ensuring sustainable development.

b) Maximising hydroelectric revenue: Enhancing revenue-sharing agreements with power producers and improving efficiency in the hydropower sector.

c) Revamping state properties: Converting unused government buildings into revenue-generating assets like hotels, business centers, or cultural hubs.

d) Auctioning mineral resources: Regulating and monetising mineral deposits through transparent and competitive bidding processes.

Effectively utilising state assets can reduce fiscal dependence on external sources and create sustainable revenue streams.

Seeking ecological compensation

As a major ecological contributor, Himachal Pradesh provides critical environmental services, including carbon sequestration and water conservation. However, these contributions often go uncompensated in national financial allocations. The state must aggressively advocate for ecological compensation, estimated at ₹90,000 Crore annually, through:

Financial incentives for forest conservation: Seeking compensatory grants from the central government.

i) Monetising carbon credits: Participating in national and international carbon trading markets.

ii) Eco-taxation: Imposing green taxes on businesses impacting the environment, with revenues directed toward conservation efforts.

iii) Securing environmental compensation will provide much-needed fiscal support while reinforcing Himachal's commitment to sustainability.

Boosting tourism revenue

Tourism is a cornerstone of Himachal Pradesh's economy, yet its revenue potential remains underutilised. The government must focus on:

i) Eco-tourism and adventure tourism: Developing sustainable resorts, trekking trails, and adventure sports facilities.

ii) Religious tourism infrastructure: Enhancing connectivity and amenities around pilgrimage sites.

iii) Cultural and heritage tourism: Restoring historical sites and promoting Himachal's unique culture and handicrafts.

iv) Better taxation and regulation: Ensuring proper taxation of tourism-related businesses to minimise revenue leakages.

v) With strategic investments and promotional efforts, tourism-driven revenue can significantly reduce dependence on external grants.

vi) Himachal Pradesh stands at a critical economic juncture where strategic action is essential to overcome fiscal distress.

By diversifying revenue streams, strengthening tax governance, optimising state resources, and fostering private sector collaboration, the state can navigate financial challenges while sustaining economic growth.

A well-implemented, multi-sectoral strategy will not only bridge fiscal deficits but also position Himachal Pradesh as a model of financial resilience.

(The writer is a strategic affairs columnist and senior political analyst. Views expressed are personal)

Imagine waking up to an urgent email with the subject line "immediate action required: your bank account has been suspended!" or "your streaming subscription has been terminated—update your payment details now!" The message no doubt looks official, with the bank's or the streaming service's logo and a professional tone, warning that your account has been compromised or your payment details need to be updated immediately.

Panic sets in. You don't want to lose access to your hard-earned money or favourite shows. Without thinking twice, you click the link in the email, which takes you to what appears to be the official website. It prompts you to enter your login credentials, bank details, or social security number. The urgency of the message makes you act fast until you realise, too late, that you have just handed over your sensitive information to cybercriminals.

This is a classic phishing scam, a deceptive tactic that is used by hackers to trick people into revealing personal and financial information by pretending to be a trusted entity. With a single click, all your accounts, confidentiality and finances could be at risk. Phishing is a cyber-attack technique where malicious actors or hackers attempt to trick people into sharing sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, and financial details by using fake websites, emails, or messages to steal data such as credit or debit card details and login credentials. This form of social engineering exploits human psychology rather than technical vulnerabilities, making it a persistent and evolving threat in the digital age. There are numerous types of Phishing Attacks, such as:

1. Whaling: A specialised type of spear phishing aimed at high-profile individuals like CEOs or government officials, often involving sophisticated social engineering tactics.

2. E-mail phishing: The most common form, where attackers send fraudulent emails pretending to be reputable entities, such as banks or online services, urging recipients to click on malicious links or download harmful attachments.

3. Spear phishing: A targeted attack where hackers gather personal information about their victims to create personalised, convincing messages that appear legitimate.

4. Smishing and vishing: Smishing (SMS phishing) uses fraudulent text messages to lure victims, while vishing (voice phishing) involves phone calls from attackers impersonating trustworthy organisations.

5. Clone Phishing: Attackers replicate legitimate emails, replacing attachments or links with malicious versions to deceive recipients.

6. Website Spoofing: Fraudsters create fake websites that closely resemble legitimate ones to trick users into entering sensitive credentials.

The first and foremost way to prevent yourself from being a victim is to enable multi-factor authentication (MFA), even if credentials are compromised for it adds an extra layer of security. Organisations should conduct regular cybersecurity training to raise awareness about phishing tactics for their employees. Even, the Indian government has taken several initiatives such as the Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative, Digital India Campaign and many more to raise awareness about phishing and enhance cybersecurity among citizens, businesses and government institutions. The Indian Government regularly posts cybersecurity tips and scam alerts through platforms like Twitter (@Cyberdost) and Facebook and the Cyber Crime Helpline 1930 allows victims to report phishing attacks quickly as a few initiatives that aim to guide how to detect and avoid phishing attacks and educates users about common phishing tactics used especially in digital payments, banking frauds and fake emails.

As a safety concern, it would be beneficial to install and update antivirus and anti-phishing tools to detect malicious content. Before entering any personal information, one must ensure the website's URL begins with "https://" and is authentic, as attackers often use slight variations of legitimate domains. It is crucial to look for red flags such as poor grammar, urgent requests and generic greetings that indicate phishing attempts.

If you fall victim to a phishing scam, act quickly to minimise damage and protect your personal and financial information. You may:

i) Immediately turn off your Wi-Fi or unplug your internet connection to prevent malware from spreading or further data theft. Report the attack to the relevant authorities or IT departments.

ii) If you entered your login credentials on a phishing site, then change the password of the compromised account immediately, followed by updating other accounts that use the same or similar passwords.

iii) If you entered banking details or made a payment, then call your bank or credit card provider immediately explain the situation, and Request to block or freeze your account if necessary.

There is no denying that phishing remains a prevalent cybersecurity threat, but with vigilance and proactive measures, individuals and organisations can mitigate risks. As cybercriminals refine their techniques, staying informed and implementing robust security practices is essential to safeguard personal and professional data from phishing attacks. Taking the mentioned steps immediately after falling victim to a phishing scam can help minimise financial and data loss while preventing further damage.

(The writer is a political analyst. Views expressed are personal)



KS TOMAR



SHAINY SHARMA

SHADOWS OF A DISTANT HOME

An artistic journey through home, migration, and identity, where cinema and visual arts converge, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Kabir Khan, Imtiaz Ali, Mithu Bhowmick (Producer of My Melbourne) and artist Ajaysingh Bhadoriya exploring the art exhibition



FINDING ART THROUGH HOME

As the festival drew to a close with *Five Films for Freedom*, an online celebration of LGBTQIA+ narratives, it was clear that this was an invitation to engage, challenge, and rethink the spaces we inhabit, both physically and emotionally.

Standing amid these artistic expressions, whether in the dark of the screening hall or the luminous glow of an art installation, there was a shift. This Festival served as reminders that in the chaos of borders, histories, and identities, storytelling remains our most powerful way of finding home.

Art and cinema are powerful forms of expression that capture human emotion, identity, and the stories we tell ourselves to make sense of the world. Walking into the 'I View World Film Festival' at Travancore Palace, curated by Myna Mukherjee, felt like entering a living canvas, where each frame, each brushstroke of storytelling, attempted to grasp the elusive, shifting meaning of home, migration, and belonging. This was part of something much larger: **Desh Pardesh**, a multidisciplinary art exposition exploring history, displacement, and identity.

Art exposition that explores notions of home, migration, gender, race, and memory across mediums and aesthetics. Bringing together several projects from micro solos by artists, designers, and architects to group shows, film festivals, and performances, in a range of mediums and scales, that respond to the complex notion of 'home' that occupies the central place in the imagination of both the local, global, and Diasporic deliberations in the global south today.

This series of parallel exhibitions allows a creative articulation of Diasporic self and space, desire, dilemmas, discontent, and delight. It uses the genre of creative representation and productions of Diaspora to ascertain the extent to which these representations and productions collapse the distinction of home and abroad and create a new global-local South Asia, highlighting that the history of modern art is a history of global turmoil, migration, and transnational exchange.

AT HOME IN THE WORLD

While the festival showcased cinematic brilliance, with auteurs like Imtiaz Ali, Kabir Khan, Onir, and



Rima Das telling stories of the marginalised and misunderstood, it was the accompanying art exhibitions that gave the event its depth. Future-Past Continuous, a group show, featured paintings, installations, and visual provocations that whispered stories of migration and memory.

The connection between cinema and art was undeniable. Take *The Shameless*, the festival's centerpiece, which unfolded like a haunting painting - dark, visceral, and poetic. Anasuya Sengupta's award-winning performance pulled audiences into the story of Renuka, a woman navigating the violence of survival and the longing for freedom. It was a moving portrait of resilience, much like the evocative works displayed at *Desh Pardesh*, where the idea

of 'home' was not just a place, but an aching question. The city premiere of *Puratwan - The Ancient* added another layer to this exploration of time and memory. With the legendary Sharmila Tagore marking her return to Bengali cinema, the film became an introspective mirror, reflecting how history, family, and unspoken truths shape us.

Desh Pardesh extended beyond paintings and film. Dance and performance became another medium of storytelling, none more powerful than, performed by Nriyagram. The piece captured the feeling of Hiraeth, a Welsh word for a deep, unfulfilled longing for something lost. It was a wordless narrative, told through movement, of memories fading and reappearing like ghosts.

At Bikaner House and Stir Gallery, micro solos and queer art shows expanded this dialogue. The exhibition questioned not just where we belong, but how identity is constructed in an ever-changing world. Do we carry home with us, or does it remain a distant echo?

The visual arts segment featured over 55 artists from across the country, each responding to the themes of migration and belonging through diverse artistic mediums. From painting and sculpture to new media art and interactive installations, the exhibition showcased how contemporary artists engage



with the evolving landscapes of home and identity. The selection of artworks highlighted both personal narratives and broader socio-political concerns, reflecting the fluidity and fragmentation of cultural memory in a rapidly changing world.

Lost in Ragas, found in Ruhaniyan's Soul

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



Experiencing the magic of Sufi music and poetry, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Some evenings stay with you long after they are over. *Jahan-e-Khusrau's* 25th edition was one such evening and curated by Muzaffar Ali, has completed 25 years, yet it remains as timeless as the poetry it celebrates. The festival, brought together voices, rhythms, and poetry that felt like something ancient yet deeply relevant. On the opening evening, *Naara-e-Mastana* by Kanwar Grewal set the tone. His voice, raw and unfiltered, carried the weight of longing that defines Sufi music. There was no hurry, just a quiet surrender to the music.

The second evening belonged to the mesmerising *Saiyaan Sajilay, Torey Naina*

Rasiley, where Manjari Chaturvedi's Kathak met the qawwali of Danish Husain Badayuni and Gufran Aslami Khairabadi. There was something hypnotic about the way dance and music intertwined, each responding to the other, neither overpowering nor retreating. *Yaad-e-Kanhaiya* by Malini Awasthi followed, her voice bringing a thumri-inspired touch to the intensity of the night. On the final day, *Raqs-e-Junoon* saw Shivani Varma's dance meet the melodies of Sina Fakhroddin and the Tehran-Delhi Music Ensemble. Their performance felt less like an act and more like a prayer. Later, *Ruh*, a poetry and storytelling session by Murad Ali, wove together words and whirling dervishes in a way that made time slow down, just for that moment.

The night ended with a qawwali, voices rising, claps growing louder, the energy filling every corner of the venue. No one was in a hurry to leave. Music had done what it always does, brought people closer, made everything else fade away for a while.

"Ishq likhne baithe toh har lafz mehka mile..."
"Jahan-e-Khusrau sirf mehfil nahi, ek manzar mile."
The festival may have drawn to a close, but its presence remains, much like the verses of a Sufi poet, growing louder in memory, until they become a part of you.



PALETTE OF POSSIBILITIES

BY SAKSHI PRIYA

Delicate Sanjhi papercuts cast intricate shadows, Kalamkari paintings unfold mythological tales in rich detail, and the textured patterns of Lippan art shimmer under the lights, each piece at *Art for Hope* - Season 4 carried a story waiting to be discovered. Organised by Hyundai Motor India Foundation. This exhibition was a platform where creativity intersected with tradition, innovation, and social change.

The event brought together 50 talented artists and collectives from across India, each presenting work that reflected personal and cultural narratives. The visual experience was enriched by performances that embodied movement and expression - Lavani, Ottan Thullal, Theyyam, and Yakshagana dancers brought age-old traditions to life, their vibrant costumes and rhythmic gestures captivating the audience. A special musical performance by differently-abled artists demonstrated the transformative power of art, proving that creativity knows no boundaries. Accessibility and inclusivity were at the heart of the exhibition. Tactile artworks, braille descriptions, and sign language tours ensured that vis-

itors of all abilities could fully engage with the displays. This thoughtful curation extended to discussions and workshops that explored themes of sustainability and representation in art. Sessions on 'Art from Waste' and 'Inclusivity in Design and the Arts' provided insight into how artistic practices can address contemporary issues while preserving heritage.

Every artwork, every performance and every discussion at exhibition reinforced the idea that art is a living, breathing entity, it carries memories, challenges norms and shape the cultural landscape.



