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# **CBSE** to prohibit exams for dummy school students

**DEEPAK KUMAR JHA** ■ New Delhi

he largest secondary education board of country — Central Board of Secondary Éducation (CBSE) - with more than 40 lakhs passouts on an average annually, has launched a massive crackdown on 'dummy' schools which has been mushrooming in connivance with the competitive exams' coaching centres to facilitate 12th board exam aspirants without going to schools.

Authorities at CBSE, which has been on crackdown spree for some time now and has conducted 400 such surprise opera-

tions, said class 12 students enrolled in labelling their operation as a "fraud." The 'dummy schools' shall be prohibited from taking board exams. A minimum of 75 per cent attendance is mandatory for students to be eligible to appear for the board examinations. In case the required attendance is not met, merely enrolling at a nonattending school may not entitle such students to appear for the CBSE examination and such students may approach the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to appear in the examination if not allowed by CBSE.

The Delhi High Court has also addressed the issue of dummy schools,

court ordered CBSE and the Delhi government to take action. On January 27, 2025, a Bench led by Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela directed authorities to enforce attendance standards at these institutions. The court also demanded a detailed affidavit from both CBSE and the Delhi government out-

Officials said the responsibility lies on both the parents and students for regular school attendance failing which they will

lining measures to prevent fraudulent

admissions and ensure a well-rounded

educational experience for students.

times there had been a fashion in the country that students preparing for competitive entrances like engineering (JEE) or medicals (NEET) get enrolled in a CBSE affiliated school after 10th to complete plus two without even going to schools and directly appear for the 12th board exams, and all facilitated by the coaching centres.

For instance thousands of students from across the country have made their base for entrance exams preparations in the coaching hub of Kota in Rajasthan while they are enrolled for school education in their States. "The practice of students

attending coaching centres while being officially enrolled in schools has to come to an end. Whichever the Board exams, be it CBSE, ICSE any State Education Boards, a certain criteria of attendance requirements is a must to enable the student to appear for the exam," said a senior Education Ministry official. The officials said that National

age holistic learning but the coaching centres and parents together seems to prioritise coaching centres over regular schooling for the millions of students.

Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is to encour-

The issue of dummy schools came into

the spotlight when a student from such an institution recently secured the top position in the JEE (Main). SGN Public School in Nangloi, where the student was registered, had been disaffiliated last year due to multiple violations, including enrolling students who did not attend classes. A surprise inspection uncovered the school's non-compliance with CBSE norms, prompting strict action.

In its ongoing crackdown the CBSE is likely amend examination bye-laws to disallow such students from appearing in the board exams and will have to take the

## Terrorists tracked and killed in Jammu

**MOHIT KANDHARI** ■ Jammu

joint team of security forces led by the elite Para Commandos of the Indian Army on Thursday gunned down at least two heavily armed foreign terrorists during a day-long fierce gunfight in which five security personnel, including a Deputy Superintendent of Police, received critical injuries in the Juthana forest area of Rajbagh in the Kathua district.

Till late evening, the security personnel had not retrieved the dead bodies of slain terrorists from inside the thick forest area. Unconfirmed reports, however, claimed an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) had spotted some dead bodies in the area. The operation was reportedly halted due to pitch-dark conditions and is likely to be resumed with the first light on Friday morning.

The security forces on ground zero were maintaining a tight cordon to prevent any terrorists from fleeing the area, taking advantage of the hilly terrain.

The local police authorities are yet to confirm whether the same group of foreign terrorists, who were spotted in the Sanyal area of Hiranagar on Sunday, were trapped by the security forces in the Juthana area of Kathua, or whether they

## **FACTOID**

- October 29, 2024: Three dreaded foreign terrorists, who were holed up inside a religious place in Akhnoor, were eliminated by the joint team of security forces in the Battal area of Akhnoor in a 27-hour-long anti-terrorist operation without suffering any major collateral
- 14 August, 2024: A young captain of the Indian Army sacrificed his life on the eve of the 78th Independence Day celebrations while leading an ongoing anti-terrorist operation aimed at flushing out Pakistani terrorists hiding in the forested belt of Assar in the Doda district
- July 8, 2024: Five soldiers of the Indian Army sacrificed their lives repulsing the attack near Badnota village of Machhedi in the Billawar tehsil of Kathua district
- June 11, 2024: Terrorists struck at two separate places in the Hiranagar tehsil of Kathua and Chattergala area of Doda district. Two terrorists were killed on June 12 while one CRPF personnel sacrificed his life in the Hiranagar encounter
- June 9, 2024: Nine pilgrims were killed and 41 others were injured in an audacious terrorist strike on a pilgrim bus for the first time in the Reasi district

were part of another group of terrorists who had managed to reach Juthana forest area without facing any resistance even during high alert sounded in the area.

According to official sources, "a fresh encounter broke out early Thursday morning in the Juthana area under the jurisdiction of Rajbagh police station around 7 am". A search party, carrying out combing and search operations in the general area of Hiranagar since Sunday evening, was initially fired upon by the terrorists, following which a fierce gun fight broke out in the area.

Senior army officers of the Rising Star Corps and DGP J&K Police were supervising the operations to neutralise the group of terrorists roaming in the area.

Till late evening, the security forces in the area had recovered only one dead body of a slain foreign terrorist, while searches were going on to retrieve the second dead body as well. Out of the five injured security personnel, a para commando, who had received gunshot injuries, was airlifted, while four others were admitted in the Government Medical College, Kathua.

Out of these four, one soldier who needed cardiothoracic surgery was referred to GMC, Jammu.

## Six HC Bar Associations meet Chief Justice

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

eaders of six High Court bar associations on Thursday met Chief Justice Jof India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna and sought withdrawal of the recommendation to transfer Delhi High Court Judge Yashwant Varma to the Allahabad High Court. Soon after the meeting, Allahabad High Court Bar Association (AHCBA) president Anil Tiwari said, the CJI had assured them of considering the demands.

The representatives of six High Court Bar Associations also met four Collegium members, Justices BR Gavai, Surya Kant, Abhay S Oka and Vikram Nath. They raised several demands, including setting in motion criminal action over the cash discovery from the judge's official home. Bar associations of High Courts of Allahabad, Gujarat, Kerala, Jabalpur, Karnataka and Lucknow submitted memorandum to CJI and Collegium members.

"The five members (of the Collegium) listened to us very carefully and told us in a positive way 'each and every point raised by you in writing will be considered by us strictly within the premises of law. Don't worry at all'. This is a very big statement by five senior judges," Tiwari told mediapersons soon after the meeting. He said the bar body would reconsider whether or not to continue with the indefinite strike. "I do not know what decision will be taken," he said.

The CJI referred to the reasons behind Collegium's recommendation to transfer Justice Varma to his parent High Court at Allahabad, Tiwari added. The Chief Justice of India said in any case, Justice Varma,

the strike in its general body meeting for a "collective decision".

"All High Courts in India are standing in support of the president of AHCBA and advocates of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association. They are really sacrificing their profession for the cause of the



Allahabad HC Bar Association President Anil Tiwari, left, Karnataka HC Bar Association President Vivek Reddy, centre, and others after meeting the CJI in New Delhi

who was de-rostered by the Delhi High Court following a directive from him, wouldn't be discharging any judicial function at the Allahabad High Court as well, he said. The bar body would discuss about

nation, for the cause of ensuring a transparent judiciary, the safe judiciary campaign, which we, we have all launched," another bar leader said.

# Yogi and Stalin draw swords on Hindi

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ Chennai

attled by the advice given by Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in which he told his Tamil Nadu counterpart MK Stalin to accept the National Education Policy (NEP) and the three-language formula (regional language, Hindi and English) in school and college curricula, the latter tried to open a new battlefront in his war against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday.

Stalin took to the social media and lambasted Yogi Adityanath and the BJP for telling him about the three-language policy and ridiculed the UP Chief Minister's statement as a political black comedy. Stalin, who is also the DMK supremo, said that there is no question of his party or government going back in its stance against Hindi. He said he was not against Hindi but would oppose any attempt to impose the language on non-Hindi speaking States.

"Tamil Nadu's fair and firm voice on Two-Language-Policy and 'Fair Delimitation' is echoing nationwide and the BJP is clearly rattled. Just watch their leaders' interviews. And now Hon'ble Yogi Adityanath wants to lecture us on hate? Spare us. This isn't irony it's political black comedy at its darkest," Stalin ridiculed the UP Chief Minister.

But his comments suffered a setback as BJP's Tamil Nadu state chief unleashing a strongly worded post within minutes in his social media page. Annamalai, BJP leader described Stalin as a 'con artist' masquerading as a protector of our constitution and our federal structure. "Usually con artists scam the rich but DMK shows no disparity; they scam both the rich and poor," ridiculed Annamalai in his statement.

Political commentators are of the view that Annamalai's words were a throwback into the days when Stalin struggled to make it big as a cine artist in early 1970s. "The whole country now knows that Stalin's family owns private schools that teach three languages and more but opposes the same policy for the State's Government schools and students. They are calling you a hypocrite, dear Stalin," Annamalai wrote targeting the high end public school Sunshine School owned by Stalin's daughter. Sunshine and other such

schools labelled as Tamil Nadu's super deluxe schools follow the three language policy and students who speak in Tamil and penalised," said Josephine Jayashanthi, professor of Tamil and a well respected novelist.

She pointed out that Stalin didn't tell anything about the rest of the country, including the South Indian States where Hindi is a compulsory language. "Stalin forgets the fact that Prime Minister and Home Minister whom he targets in his diatribe speak Gujarati which too is an ancient language," said Jayashanthi.

Former Telangana Governor Tamilisai Sounderarajan cautioned the people of the State about Stalin's mission to divide the people based on religion and said it would not work in the State. "He is trying to divert the attention of the people from the daily murders, rapes and dacoity happening across the State. The DMK has institutionalised corruption and it is of gargantuan level," said Sounderarajan.

Stalin is upset over reports about the revival of the AIADMK-BJP alliance in the State and this could upset his plans to retain power in the 2026 Assembly election.

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## **Commemorative** Stamp demand for iconic Sholay and *Deewaar*

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ctor turned politician, Samajwadi Party MP Jaya Bachchan, on ▲ Thursday urged the Centre to issue commemorative stamps celebrating 50 years of the iconic Bollywood films Deewaar and Sholay.

Speaking in a Parliamentary session after Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar allowed her to speak, Jaya who starred in Sholay along with megastar and her husband Amitabh Bachchan, highlighted their cultural significance and lasting impact on Indian cinema. Jaya stressed that the stamps would honour the films' legacy and recognise their role in shaping the Indian film industry. Deewaar and Sholay remain beloved classics, making this tribute a meaningful acknowledgment of their enduring influence, said Jaya.

Amitabh has the lead role in Deewaar with co-star as Shashi Kapoor and in Sholay Amitabh stole the screen which also has in lead role Dharmendra, Hema Malini, Sanjeev Kumar and Amjad Khan. Both films were released in 1975. Jaya and Hema are currently Members of Parliament while Amitabh and Dharmendra are ex-MPs.

## Veer Savarkar to come alive with Artificial Intelligence

**DEEPAK KUMAR JHA** ■ New Delhi

n a groundbreaking development, young entrepreneurs from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have recreated the historic Cellular Jail in Virtual Reality (VR). The initiative allows users to experience the hardships endured by India's freedom fighters, including interacting with an AI-powered avatar of Veer Savarkar.

Kala Pani, stands as a silent testament to the struggles of India's freedom

The Cellular Jail, also known as



fighters. Through this VR recreation, users can virtually explore the prison's interiors, witness the grueling oil extraction process that prisoners were subjected to, and engage with AI-driven narratives that bring history closer than ever before.

This project is part of the XR Creator Hackathon, organised by Wavelaps in partnership with the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. The project aims to bring India's heritage sites to life through immersive technology, offering a first-of-its-kind historical VR experience.

The team behind this initiative consists of young entrepreneurs from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, who are passionate about preserving and promoting India's heritage through

immersive technology.
Dinesh Lal (Lead Developer), Souvik Barua (3D Artist & Animator) and M Vinod (Environment Artist & Build Production Expert) have worked together to create this groundbreaking

Dinesh Lal specialises in XR development and AI integration, bringing historical figures to life through AI avatars. Souvik Barua focuses on 3D modeling and animation, ensuring realistic recreations of historical sites.

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# Strict security for Alvida Namaz, says UP DGP

→he Director General of Police (DGP) of Uttar Pradesh Prashant Kumar has issued strict directives to ensure robust security arrangements for Alvida Namaz and the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations across the state.

"The primary objective of these measures is to maintain peace and harmony during the festive period," the DGP said here on Thursday. Security forces have been instructed to monitor sensitive areas using drone cameras. This will help keep a close watch on anti-social elements and prevent any untoward incidents.

Additionally, police personnel, Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) will be deployed in identified sensitive and highly sensitive areas. Static pickets, magistrates, and senior officers will also be stationed in these locations to ensure law and order. The DGP has made it clear

that no new traditions will be allowed during Alvida Namaz and Eid celebrations. Any attempt to introduce a new practice will be strictly prohibited, and

**Security forces have been** instructed to monitor sensitive areas using drone cameras. This will help keep a close watch on anti-social elements

legal action will be taken against violators.

To maintain communal harmony, senior officials have been directed to engage in regular dialogue with religious leaders and members of peace committees. This initiative aims to foster mutual trust and prevent any tensions at the community level. Strict surveillance will be maintained on social media platforms to curb the spread of misinformation and rumors. Any provocative or misleading content will be promptly removed, and appropriate legal action will be taken against those responsible. Security measures will also include regular patrolling and checking in crowded places such as markets, malls, railway stations.

Bomb disposal squads and sniffer dogs will be deployed to inspect these locations and detect any suspicious objects or activities.

Emergency response vehicles will be stationed along sensitive routes to ensure swift action in case of any crisis. Additionally, fire brigade services will be placed on high alert in busy market areas to handle any emergencies effectively. The DGP has emphasised that no lapses in security will be tolerated, and all measures will be implemented strictly to ensure a peaceful and safe environment during the festivities. The UP Police remains committed to maintaining law and order and ensuring the safety of all residents during this period.

# TMC rejects Shah's claim that Bengal spiking border fencing

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA** ■ Kolkata

eacting strongly to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement — Mamata Banerjee Government's dilly dallying with the grant of requisite lands was causing an inordinate delay in the construction of fences along the India-Bangladesh borders — the Trinamool Congress on Thursday that the Centre was not serious about fencing in order to play politics of polarisation

"They are blaming Bengal Government but they are themselves not serious about border fencing in many areas, not only this they are also raising questions on infiltration though it is the Border Security Force that works under the Union Home Ministry which is responsible for checking infiltration," TMC leader Arup Bhattacharya said.

Earlier slamming the State Government for obstructing the completion of border fencing Shah said that open borders were leading to large scale infiltration. Shah told the Lok Sabha that 450 km of

fencing still remained to be completed due to non-cooperation from the Mamata Banerjee Government. 'The fencing work of 450 km is still to

be completed because the State is not giving land for it," Shah said, alleging how the TMC was repeatedly causing hindrances to the security efforts. Out of about 4,100 kms long border Bengal, shares the longest land border with Bangladesh at 2,217  $\bar{k}m$ .

Earlier Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari too slammed the Mamata Banerjee Government for encouraging infiltrations so as to keep her vote banks intact.

"Thousands of Rohingyas are entering from Bangladesh with the help of the local police and the TMC men, the Government is not doing to stop this because they constitute the vote bank of Mamata Banerjee," Adhikari said adding how the same Chief Minister when she was the opposition leader had accused the CPI(M) Government of encouraging in infiltration from Bangladesh for vote bank politics.

Meanwhile in a parallel development one person was seriously injured when bombs were hurled and gunshots fired outside the Bhatpara residence of senior BJP leader and former MP Arjun Singh. The BJP leader said that the son of a local Trinamool Congress councilor was behind

The BJP leader and his supporters reportedly chased away the miscreants sources said. Bhatpara- Barrackpore region in the North 24 Parganas has of late become a hot spot for crimes with more than a dozen such incidents taking place in the past one year or so.

They were firing in front of the police but the police were silent," Singh who was later summoned to the police station but would not turn up said. "The police are investigating the case

and the guilty will soon be brought to book," Police Commissioner Ajay Thakur

## **Health Ministry** releases national guidelines on medical oxygen management

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

nion Health Ministry released the National Guidelines on Medical Oxygen Management on Thursday as Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava emphasised the critical role of properly maintaining and utilising medical oxygen infrastructure.

Salila was speaking at a workshop at Delhi AIIMS which marked the launch of the National Capacity Building Programme on Oxygen Management.

The programme aims to train 200 "master trainers" who will work towards capacity building of hospital administrators and medical officers across the country in proper handling and utilisation of medical oxygen, reducing wastage and improving clinical outcomes.

Addressing those gathered for the workshop, Salila said maintaining medical oxygen infrastructure was necessary to meet the needs in case of any surge capacity in a healthcare facility. She also stressed the need to incorporate learnings from India's management of the COVID-19 pan-

Dr M Srinivas, Director, AIIMS highlighted the institute's role in spearheading the capacity-building programme and stressed the importance of training and awareness at all levels of healthcare. The release of National Guidelines on Medical Oxygen Management marks a significant step toward strengthening the country's medical oxygen infrastructure and ensuring uniform best practices in oxygen management across healthcare facilities, the health ministry said in a statement.

The comprehensive guidelines provide a framework for the efficient procurement, storage and administration of medical oxygen, with a focus on patient safety, capacity building, and emergency preparedness.

The National Capacity Building Programme on Oxygen Management is an initiative led by the Disaster Management Cell of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with

## Udaan school aims to give wings to children

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

Rohini Nakshatra, in Vedic astrology, symbolises growth, fertility, and prosperity, besides being considered as auspicious. Not without reason, Rohini in North Delhi is becoming home to a school dedicated to growth and empowerment of special children. Inaugurated early this week by

Narendra Nath Misra, Independent, Non-Executive Director, and Gajanan S Kale, CEO, Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd.

Along with top dignitaries of the company, the 'Udaan Special Learning School, is an inspiring initiative of Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd along with partner NGO, Viklang Sahara Samiti Delhi (VSSD). The school primarily caters to special children aged 6 to 18 years, targeting those with intellectual disabilities, hearing and speech impairments, and mental developmental issues. Currently, 50 beneficiaries have already enrolled in the program, which offers a structured curriculum that emphasises daily living skills, and vocational training. "Every child deserves encouragement and the opportunity to realise their potential. Udaan Special Learning School aims to give wings to the dreams of children with special needs by providing rehabilitation services and vocational



training while creating skilled professionals to support individuals with intellectual, speech, and hearing disabilities. Through guidance, training, and care,

this initiative seeks to nurture their abilities and empower them to lead confident, self-reliant lives," said Kale on

## **Tri-service integrated exercise** held in India's northern borders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Kolkata

**◄**he Indian Army, Air Force and Navy conducted a three-day tri-service integrated multi-domain exercise till Thursday in the rugged high-altitude terrain of the Himalayas in the northern borders of the country, a Defence official said.

Unmanned aerial vehicles and space resources were put to use in 'Exercise Prachand Prahaar' along with deployment of advanced surveillance resources of all three services, including long-range surveillance aircraft of the Indian Air Force and maritime domain awareness aircraft of the Indian Navy apart from helicopters,

The three-day exercise saw the participation of the Indian Army's elite special forces in tandem with the surveillance resources to create seamless domain awareness and detect simulated targets, the official said in a statement.

Targets were swiftly destroyed through the synchronised joint firepower of fighter aircraft, long-range rocket systems, medium artillery, armed helicopters, swarm drones, loitering munitions and kamikaze drones in an electronically contested environment in the exercise, he said.

This exercise is in continuation with 'Exercise Poorvi Prahar' held in November 2024, which focused on the integrated application of aviation assets, the official

"Exercise Prachand Prahaar validated

integrated planning, command and con-

trol as well as seamless execution of sur-

veillance and firepower platforms across the three services, covering the entire spectrum of conflict," he said. The exercise underscored the armed forces' unwavering commitment to jointness, precision and technological superi-

ority, he said. "It reinforced the ability to execute multi-domain operations with unparalleled synergy, ensuring India's preparedness to

deter and decisively engage any emerging threat along its strategic frontiers," the offi-General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Command, Lieutenant General

Ram Chander Tiwari, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Air Command, Air Marshal Surat Singh and Naval Officer-in-Charge, West Bengal, Commodore Ajay Yadav, reviewed the exercise and commended the participants on their high professional standards.

## Opposition flags 'denial of speaking opportunity' to LoP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

n opposition parties' delegation met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla **L** on Thursday to flag the "denial of opportunity" to Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to speak in the House, as well as the "politicisation" of his asking the Congress leader to follow the rules of procedure.

Congress's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi said the INDIA bloc delegation, comprising the Congress, SP, TMC, DMK, Kerala Congress, RJD, IUML, RLP and MDMK, met the speaker during the Zero Hour. "We have given a letter, which was

signed by many parties, including the RSP and Shiv Sena (UBT). We conveyed

our collective concern and disappointment to the speaker on how the ruling side is violating the traditions, rules and culture of the House," Gogoi told reporters after the meeting.

He said the main matter was the context and issue over which Birla made a statement on the LoP on Wednesday.

"He made a reference to Rule 349 and said the members and the LoP must follow this. What specific incident he was referring to was not clear. There was politicisation and propaganda over the speaker's remarks. We apprised the speaker of how his remarks had been politicised outside," Gogoi said.

The convention of allowing the LoP to speak when they stand up has been disregarded repeatedly.

## MNREGA scam uncovered in Amroha struggling with financial hardship. The

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE** Lucknow

fresh controversy has erupted in the Amroha district, Uttar Pradesh, after an alleged scam in the MNREGA job card system exposed the misuse of the rural employment scheme. Among those listed as MNREGA workers is cricketer Mohammad Shami's sister, Shabina, despite her family's affluent status. The revelation has triggered a probe by the district administration.

Shabina, a resident of Palola village in Joya block, is the daughter-in-law of village head Gule Ayesha. Official records indicate that her family owns a house worth over ?20 lakh, and her son is currently pursuing an MBBS degree. Despite these financial credentials, she and her relatives have reportedly received wages

under the scheme meant for economically weaker sections.

Authorities have also unearthed similar irregularities, with job cards fraudulently issued in the names of doctors, engineers, and other well-off individuals. In Palola village alone, 657 job cards were

registered, but only 150 remain active. Shabina's name appears at number 477 on the list, registered on January 4, 2021. Her brother-in-law, Ghaznavi, allegedly worked for about 300 days between 2021 and 2024, receiving approximately ?66,000

The village head's two sons—one studying MBBS and the other law-along with a contractor and his engineer son, were also listed as MNREGA workers. MNREGA, a flagship government scheme, is designed to provide employment opportunities to rural households

fraudulent inclusion of financially stable individuals in the program has raised serious concerns about corruption and loopholes in the system.

Amroha District Magistrate Nidhi Gupta has taken note of the issue and directed the MNREGA Deputy Commissioner to conduct a detailed investigation. She assured that strict action would be taken against those found guilty, and efforts would be made to recover the misappropriated funds.

This incident has once again highlighted the vulnerabilities in welfare schemes and the urgent need for stricter oversight to prevent their misuse.

The administration has pledged to implement stronger monitoring mechanisms to curb such fraudulent practices

Six HC Bar

**Associations** 

ed from >> P1 He said the bar

meet Chief

**Justice** 

## Online grievance portal integrated with common service centres in rural areas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

he Centre has integrated its online portal for redressal of public grievances with common service centers across the country to help people living in rural areas register their complaints, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on

The citizenry can file their grievances through 5.1 lakh common service centers, he told Rajya Sabha in a written reply to a question. A total of 4.91 lakhs grievances has been lodged through the CSC as on March 20, 2025, said the Minister of State for Personnel.

The government has established the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), a 24x7 online platform, to enable citizens to lodge grievances related to service delivery by public authorities, he said.

This portal is connected to all ministries and departments of the government of India and states and is also accessible via a mobile application available on Google Play and integrated with UMANG (unified mobile application), the minister

said. "CPGRAMS has been integrated with Common Service Centres (CSCs) to leverage its strength to take the facility of CPGRAMS to rural population," Singh said. Citizens can track grievances using a unique registration ID, appeal if dissatisfied, and provide feedback.

The government has issued detailed guidelines for its use, the latest being on August 23, 2024, and has prescribed a 21day timeframe for grievance redressal, with mandatory interim replies if resolution within the stipulated time is not possible, he added. Since 2019, more than 1.15 crore

grievances have been redressed, with over 1 lakh grievance redressal officers mapped to the system, the minister said. The 20th of every month is observed as "CSC-CPGRAMS Day" to expand outreach, and Prasar Bharati has been engaged for wider dissemination through All India Radio and Doordarshan, he said.

The government highlights best practices in grievance redressal through monthly reports like the 30th CPGRAMS report published recently, Singh said.

In another response, the minister said during the five years from January 1, 2020

to December 31, 2024, a total of 1,07,58,476 grievances were received through CPGRAMS and 1,15,52,503 were redressed, which includes the cases brought forward.

The government has adopted the 10 step reforms of CPGRAMS to make grievance redressal timely, meaningful and accessible to citizen, he said. "The government has mapped 103,183 grievance officers on the CPGRAMS portal. The average timelines of redressal have come down from 28 days in 2019 to 13 days in 2024 for central government," Singh said.

leaders have brought to the notice of the CJI the larger issue of corruption in the judiciary. One thing we pointed out to the Chief Justice and his Collegium is our concern is not Justice Yashwant Varma person, because he is just one of the symptoms. We are looking at the disease itself, and we have pointed out that when the courts or in the Collegium is unable to pull out the bad apples. It affects the entire judiciary," said advocate Yeshwant Shenoy, president of the Kerala High Court Bar Association. Shenoy said in the meeting the need

to create a system through which the bad apples could be picked out upon identification was stressed upon. Not only the CJI, but the entire Collegium members understood the concern, and assured they also want a "clean judiciary", he added. Another bar leader joined in, "It is not that the judges alone can be corrupt, so it is an entire aspect the bar has put its support behind the judiciary, and things will definitely change from here onward." The Allahabad High Court Bar Association has been on an indefinite strike from March 25 onward to protest the proposed repatriation of Justice Varma to his parent High Court.

# Veer Savarkar to come alive with Artificial Intelligence

ed from >> P1 M Vinod is responsible for environment design and builds production, making the virtual exploration of Cellular Jail as immersive as possible. Their vision extends beyond Cellular Jail - they aim to bring India's historic sites and indigenous GI-tagged products to a global audience through VR. Speaking about the XR Creator

Hackathon, Dinesh Lal emphasised its role in shaping the future of technological education, saying, "This Hackathon inspires students to look beyond traditional study paths and explore emerging technologies like XR as a mainstream field. It's a chance to step into the future and see how innovation can solve realworld problems." As India embraces XR as the future of digital storytelling and cultural preservation, collaborations like these will continue to shape the nation's technological landscape. The success of VRkshetra is not just a milestone but a glimpse into an era where history, heritage, and commerce seamlessly merge with immersive reality, redefining how the world experiences India.

Wavelaps, a leading AR/VR company, provides consultancy to the Ministry in WAVES' XR domain. The success of the Hackathon was further reinforced by the contributions of Bharat XR and XDG, two of India's premier XR communities. The success of the Hackathon has been further reinforced by the contributions of Bharat XR and XDG, two of India's pre-

mier XR communities. Beyond historical immersion, team VRkshetra has taken innovation a step further by integrating VR with real-world commerce. The VR experience features a virtual marketplace where users can explore and purchase authentic indigenous products. Among them is Virgin Coconut Oil, once extracted under forced labour by prisoners and now produced by the Nicobarese tribal community. This oil has received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, certifying its authenticity and cultural significance. Through this platform, users can not only experience these products in VR but also order them for home delivery, bridging the gap between the virtual and physical worlds.

## Terrorists tracked and killed...

According to local villagers in the area, the security personnel were on high alert and conducting random searches since Tuesday after a local resident, Darshana Devi, had informed the police that two men in army fatigues carrying backpacks had asked her for water. The woman said the duo then went back inside the jungle in the area.

Former BDC, Chairperson Brijeshwar Singh Indu, who was camping in the area since morning, told reporters, the terrorists had carved out a safe hideout in the thickly forested area of Juthana with the help of Over Ground Workers and managed to ambush the soldiers patrolling in the area. He demanded stern action against the OGWs. Local reports suggested the police had also busted a module of OGWs in August 2024 after arresting 8 civilians along with Haji Lateef.

Since Sunday evening, a massive search Hiranagar.

operation involving the police, army, NSG, BSF, and CRPF armed with technical and surveillance equipment and supported by helicopter, UAVs, drones, bulletproof vehicles, and sniffer dogs continued to track down the terrorists, who are believed to have infiltrated on Saturday via either the ravine route or through a newly created tunnel from across the border. The security forces, led by DGP Police

Nalin Prabhat, extended the search operation, particularly the routes leading to the Billawar forest, and were successful in tracking down the terrorists.

The search parties on Monday found four loaded magazines of M4 carbine, two grenades, a bulletproof jacket, sleeping pags, tracksuits, several packets of eatables, and separate polythene bags containing material for making Improvised Explosive Devices near the scene of the encounter in

# Assembly withdraws pending inquiries against officials

RAJESH KUMAR New Delhi

n a big relief to Delhi Government officials, the Delhi Legislative Assembly has withdrawn all the pending inquiries by Privileges Committee, Petitions Committee and Questions and Reference Committee. The Delhi Assembly has adopted a resolution, moved by the BJP MLA Abhay Verma on

The Delhi Assembly's move will bring relief to at least 200 bureaucrats both serving and retired from the Delhi government. The officials include former Delhi Chief Secretary Anshu Prakash, MM Kutty, Shurbir Singh, JB Singh, G Narender Kumar, Maisha Saxena, Varsha joshi, Amjad Tak, Sanjiv Khirwal, Amit Singla, Amit Singla, Jaidev Sarangi, Rupesh Thakur, Nidhi Srivastva and Ashish Verma. Notably, Most of the complaints were filed

by members of the previous ruling party against officers of the Delhi Government.

Therefore, this House resolves that no further action be taken on the pending cases referred to the Committee on Privileges, the Committee on Petitions, and the Committee on Questions and References during the Sixth and Seventh Legislative Assemblies, and that they be considered as disposed off," Speaker Vijender Gupta said in the House while adopting the resolution.

In his resolution, Abhay Verma urged the House that "no further action should be taken on the pending cases sent to the Petition Committee, Privilege Committee, Question and Reference Committee during the sixth and seventh Assembly and they should be considered settled," which was passed by the house.

The resolution passed by Delhi Assembly brought major relief to the many



bureaucrats who were facing investigation before the Privileges Committees since last

The Committee on Privileges had 59 cases pending from the Sixth Legislative Assembly and 69 cases from the Seventh

Legislative Assembly.
As per Rule 223, the Committee on Privileges is generally required to submit its report within one month. Most of the complaints were filed by members of the then ruling party against officers of the Delhi Government. Similarly, the Committee on Petitions had 107 cases pending from the Sixth Legislative Assembly and 72 cases from the Seventh Legislative Assembly. The Committee on Questions and References also has 04 cases pending from the Seventh Legislative

In a statement, Speaker Vijender Gupta said there was an attempt to target officers tees as well. Some cases before these committees have been pending since 2016 and no meetings have been held for their investigation. Some officers sought protection from the courts, and eight of these cases are now before the Delhi High Court. "I feel that the Committees of the

of the Delhi Government in these commit-

eighth Legislative Assembly should start with a clean slate and not get entangled in cases that appear to be motivated. We need to consider whether it befits the legislature or its committees to keep officers, some of whom have now retired, under stress, Therefore, I request the House to consider whether these cases should be carried forward or dropped. The Chief Whip, Abhay Verma, has given notice to move a resolution in this regard. Verma moved the resolution in this regard and made his statement. The resolution was passed," read

# CM Rekha Gupta announces celebration of state foundation days in Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ith Delhi being a confluence of citizens from across the country, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday announced that foundation days of every State will be celebrated in the national Capital as a mark of respect to people of various states who have made Delhi as their second home.

The Chief Minister made the announcement while responding to the budget discussion in the Delhi Assembly.

The BJP ruled Delhi Government will celebrate Odisha Day on April 1 and will invite Odia people residing in Delhi on the occasion.

The national Capital recently celebrated Bihar's foundation day on March 23. This was the first time that the State Government has celebrated the foundation day. This will help to promote cultural tourism in the national Capital

Delhi, being the national capital, offers more options for companies, employment, education, entertainment, historical sites, places of worship, and an array of other things. Over the years, there has been a significant influx of migrants from various

According to 2011 census data, Delhi

has the second highest population of interstate migrants in India, which shows that marriage and work or business drive the influx. The city— State only trails Maharashtra, a much larger and more populous state.

Every third Haryanvi who has migrated to Delhi has done so because of marriage. For people from the north — eastern states, education is the main reason for moving to the national capital. And for those from Kerala, it is mainly work (or business) which brings them to Delhi. The southern parts of Delhi have the highest share of migrants in their population. The three districts of South West Delhi, South Delhi and New Delhi have a more than 40 per cent share of inter-state migrants in the total population. This figure is the lowest, just 17 per cent, for the Central district, which includes the walled city, among the oldest habitations of the city — State.

Almost half of the migrants in Delhi in 2011 were from Uttar Pradesh. The share of migrants in Delhi from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand increased consistently between 1991 and 2011. More than two-thirds of Delhi's migrant population came from these

The city offers some considerable opportunities for growth and on — site work More jobs are available in a variety of industries, including the public and private sectors as well as the manufacturing, oil and gas, automotive, television, entertainment, textile, food and beverage, hotel and restaurant, engineering, research and development, IT, ITES, and other multinational corporations. Compared to places like Mumbai or Bangalore, it's easier to locate a house in Delhi that meets your budget. Delhi is more inexpensive for those searching for housing because residences there are priced cheaper.

Launching a vitriolic attack on the previous AAP government, Rekha Gupta on Thursday alleged that while only 97 families of COVID victims received financial aid, the administration spent ₹17 crore on publicity. Rekha Gupta defended her government's one lakh crore Budget in the Delhi Assembly and accused the AAP of wasting public money on advertisements instead of welfare initiatives. "When people were dying during COVID, the AAP Government spent Rs three crore on a Diwali celebration event and ₹11 crore on its publicity. They also spent ₹seven crore on promoting a sports university that only exists on paper," she said.

# Assembly uproars as Minister, LoP lock horns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

**¬**he Delhi Assembly on Thursday witnessed a massive uproar after BJP MLA and Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Parvesh Verma took a dig at Leader of Opposition (LoP) Atishi, as she interrupted him during the Question Hour. Verma, was replying a question on the pilgrimage schemes and the financial support provided by the government for various religious trips when he was interrupted by Atishi, who is also the Leader of Opposition.

"Bhai", an otherwise unremarkable word made by Verma presumably to Atishi, led to a 13-minute long disruption and heated exchanges between the ruling BJP and the AAP during the House proceeding on Thursday. After uproar by the opposition party MLAs, the PWD minister asked the opposition leaders, "What did I say? How is it wrong to say 'bhai'?"

"Atishiji is my sister, not my brother," Verma added after a few more exchanges with AAP MLAs. The Assembly proceedings then went back to the normal.

Opposition AAP MLAs reacted angrily to the comment. Atishi, a former Chief Minister, stood up to counter Verma's charge.

As the minister tried to resume his answer, Atishi and other AAP MLAs con-



Public Works Department Minister Parvesh

tinue their loud protests. After repeated failed attempts to resume his speech, a seemingly exasperated Verma said, "Kahan se laaye ĥo bhai?

Atishi also stood up in protest again, saying the language used by Verma was "unparliamentary

Other AAP MLAs too joined in and

accused the minister of showing disrespect. The Speaker asked AAP members what was the offending word as Verma only said 'bhai' which is not objectionable. "I don't understand the issue

As the uproar continued, Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta marshalled out tow opposition party MLAs Vishesh Ravi and Kuldeep Kumar from the House and later one more MLA, Mukesh Ahlawat' was also suspended. However, after request from the AAP delegation, suspension of both the MLAs was revoked.

AAP MLA Ravi, who was suspended for opposing Verma, said that he has a long history of making such remarks. One side he made objectionable remark while the other side Speaker suspended Opposition party legislatures.

This kind of biasness encourages ruling party people to make objectionable comments.

"This is unacceptable that we are being punished instead of those who are using such words. We will keep showing solidarity for the LoP who is not just a woman but a former CM of the national capital," Verma said.

Ruling party legislatures said the opposition was deliberately creating disruption since the question was on Chhath Puja. Some BJP leaders then raised slogans of "Chhathi maiyya ki jai."

## Free NEET, CUET coaching for Class 12 students



Delhi CM Rekha Gupta with Education Minister Ashish Sood during MOU signing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

n a significant step toward empowering students from Delhi Government schools, the Delhi Government has partnered with PhysicsWallah (PW) to provide free coaching for Class 12 students preparing for NEET and CUET (UG) 2025. Under this initiative, 1.63 lakh students will have access to a 30-day online crash course from April 2 to May 2, with six hours of daily classes.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Delhi Directorate of Education and BIG Institute and Physics Wallah Limited is a joint initiative of a joint initiative of NSDC International, Ministry of Skills, Government of India that will provide free online coaching for NEET and CUET to

1.63 lakh government school students. The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Education Minister Ashish Sood.

Speaking after signing the MoU, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said, "This MoU has been signed to provide exclusive 30-day free online coaching for students of the Directorate of Education (DoE) to prepare for NEET-2025 and CUET (UG)-2025, paving the way for their admission into medical colleges and central universities."

The Chief Minister said the initiative aims to help government school students secure admissions in medical and engineering colleges.

"With this, more and more students from Delhi government schools will get the opportunity to enrol in good colleges and successfully clear entrance exams for medical and engineering programmes,"

Sood said that as part of this effort, the Delhi Government has signed an MoU with BIG, which is a part of NSDC, to offer a 30-day free online crash course-totalling 180 hours, with six hours of coaching each day-for NEET 2025 and CUET (UG) 2025

This pro bono initiative will equip our students with the necessary guidance to excel in these crucial exams, significantly enhancing their chances of securing admission into top medical colleges and central universities," he added.

The Minister assured that the government remains committed to strengthening educational opportunities and will continue to take steps to support students in their journey towards higher education and professional success.

Under this initiative, students will receive six hours of daily online coaching from April 2 to May 2, 2025, covering subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology Mathematics, General Aptitude and English, according to a statement. The programme includes PDF notes for structured revision, regular scheduled tests to track progress and a dedicated doubt-resolution mechanism for continuous support, it said

The statement said the initiative would be a 'game-changer' for students from marginalised communities, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder their academic aspirations.

# Speaker Vijender Gupta rejects LoP Atishi's allegations on law and order

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ejecting the Leader of Opposition Atishi's allegations, Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on Thursday said law and order does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Delhi Government and thus cannot be discussed inside Vidhan Sabha. Speaker Gupta was responding in the Assembly to Atishi's letter, in which she accused him of rejecting Special Mention notices by AAP MLAs on the law and order situation in the capital.

In a statement, Speaker Gupta stated that Special Mention notices must be related to subjects under the jurisdiction of the Delhi government. "The notices submitted by the Opposition shall not refer to a matter which is not primarily the concern of the Government of India, it shall not refer to a matter which has been discussed in the same session or which is substantially identical to the matter already raised by a member under this rule during the session," Speaker Gupta ruled while rejecting the Leader of Opposition's allegations.

Atishi raised serious concerns over the worsening law and order situation in Delhi, stating that incidents of firing, kidnapping, murder, and rape have become commonplace. She highlighted that drugs are being sold openly, with even young children falling victim to addiction.

However, when AAP MLAs attempted to raise this issue in the Assembly, Speaker Vijender Gupta dismissed it, calling it a "waste of time" and refusing to allow any discussion on law and order.

He accused the Opposition of trying to misuse House procedures for political gains rather than addressing public welfare issues like pollution, sanitation and dengue control."The notices submitted by the Opposition, which I did not accept, were merely an attempt to misuse the procedures of the House and create organ ised disruptions. I will not allow this".

"I will always welcome healthy and democratic debates in the House. However, I will not permit any discussions aimed at gaining political advantage and

**LoP Atishi raised serious** concerns over the worsening law and order situation in **Delhi, stating that incidents** of firing, kidnapping, murder and rape have become commonplace

wasting the time of the House for self glorification in the media," Gupta asserted. However, considering the nature of the issues raised in the House, the Speaker may allow notices on reserved subjects only if they are deemed extremely urgent and important matters affecting the people of Delhi and requiring the immediate attention of the House. In a statement, Speaker Gupta said, "Issues raised under Special Mention must be related to matters of urgent public importance. However, I have observed that instead of focusing on real issues affecting the public, Opposition members are more interested in creating disturbances. They could raise concerns regarding the government's summer preparedness, vectorborne diseases, dengue control measures, pollution reduction steps, waterlogging, sanitation, and garbage disposal issues directly linked to public welfare. Instead, their primary focus seems to be attracting media attention and disrupting

the proceedings of the House."

"The Delhi Assembly follows the Special Mention rules as prescribed in the Rajya Sabha. According to Rule 180B (II) of the Rajya Sabha rules, it is clearly stated that a Special Mention should not refer to a matter that does not primarily fall under the jurisdiction of the government. Additionally, Rule 180B (III) states that a Special Mention should not refer to an issue similar to one that has already been raised. In light of this, I had directed the Secretariat not to permit repeated matters or those intended solely to create disruptions in the House".

This is not the first time such an incident has occurred. I will always welcome healthy and democratic debates in the House. However, I will not permit any discussions that are solely aimed at gaining political advantage and wasting the time of the House for self-glorification in the media," Speaker Gupta said in the statement. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has hit back, pointing out that the Speaker is shielding the BJP-led central and Delhi governments from accountability. Atishi condemned the decision, highlighting the rising incidents of shootings, crimes against women, and rampant drug trade

## First cultural evening in Assembly on March 30

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

elhi Assembly for the first time will host a cultural evening on March 30, to celebrate the auspicious occasion of the Hindu New Year, which commences with Chaitra Shukla Pratipada. This celebration marks the beginning of the 'Vikram Samvat 2082', a traditional Hindu lunar calendar era.

The function will be held at Delhi Legislative Assembly premise, Old Secretariat.

The event will feature performances by renowned singer and lyricist Kailash Kher and the Kailasa Band, with 1,500 distinguished guests invited to part in the

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta

on Thursday stated that this marks the first occasion of organising a cultural event for the New Year not only in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, but also in any other state assembly across the country. He emphasised, "The Hindu New Year

is not merely a change of date but a symbol of renewed energy and vitality. As farmers welcome new harvests into their homes, this festival holds profound economic and social significance, honouring the agricultural community, which has always been the backbone of our nation. It is a joyous opportunity to celebrate our culture and civilisation with enthusiasm, ensuring their rejuvenation and fostering renewed energy in all our lives."

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta will grace the occasion as the chief guest.

## PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

→he Resident Welfare Association (RWA) of Defence Colony is collecting ₹1,000 from every household to raise the penalty imposed by the Supreme Court (SC) for the unauthorised occupation of the Lodhi-era monument, Gumti of Shaikh Ali, for over six decades.

The Supreme Court directed the Defence Colony RWA to pay ₹40 lakh as This is how we plan to pay the compensation for using the historical site

Resident Welfare Association president Ranjit Singh said, "We are collecting ₹1,000 from each household to collect the required amount. This is how we plan to pay the penalty once we receive the official notice."

Welfare Association members and resi-

dents immediately stepped forward to

contribute, he added. There are over 800

Following the court's directive, Resident

families in Defence Colony, Singh said. "Some members of Defence Colony Resident Welfare Association are contributing larger amounts, and I am per-

sonally adding a significant sum. This is

how we are gathering the required penal-

ty amount," he said.

SC penalty: Defence Colony RWA collects funds from residents

We are collecting ₹1,000 from each household to collect the required amount. penalty once we receive the official notice. Some members of **Defence Colony RWA are** contributing larger amounts

- RANJIT SINGH, RWA PRESIDENT

As of now, they have not received a formal notice from the Supreme Court regarding the payment. However, once they do, they will pay, he said.

has vacated the historical site and handed it over to the authorities.

Earlier, the Supreme Court has directed the Defence Colony Resident Welfare Association to pay ₹40 lakh as compensation for the unauthorised occupation of Lodhi-era monument "Gumti of Shaikh Ali" for over six decades.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah refused to waive off the cost and posted the matter for hearing on April 8.

"We think it will be appropriate if compensation of ₹40 lakh is paid by the Resident Welfare Association (RWA) to the department of archaeology, Delhi government, entrusted with the task of conservation and restoration of the monu-

ment," the bench said. The Supreme Court had earlier asked the Resident Welfare Association to explain how much costs should be Singh also added that the association imposed on it for the unauthorised occu-

pation of the monument.

The bench had directed Delhi's archaeology department to constitute a commit-

tee for the restoration of the monument. The bench previously directed for a "peaceful" handover of the site's possession to the Land and Development Office.

The bench had passed the order after perusing a report filed by Swapna Liddle, who is ex-convener of the Delhi chapter of the Indian National Trust for Art and

Cultural Heritage. The court had appointed Liddle to survey and inspect the building and ascertain the damage caused to the monument and the extent of its restoration.

The bench in November 2024, pulled up the ASI for failing to protect the monument in Defence Colony, with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) flagging that a Resident Welfare Associationwas using the 15th century structure as its office.

# **Lok Sabha passes Immigration** and Foreigners Bill 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ok Sabha passed the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025 on Thursday, with Home Minister Amit Shah asserting that those who come to India for business, education and investment are welcome, but those who pose a threat to security will face stringent action. Various amendments moved by Opposition members were negated and the bill was passed by a voice vote.

Shah said the bill is necessary to strengthen the country's security and economy, promote manufacturing and trade, get global recognition for the education system and help universities earn international repute. Replying to a debate on the bill, he said the proposed legislation will strengthen the country's security, boost economy and business, besides encouraging the health and

Shah also said the bill will ensure the country gets up-to-date information about every foreigner visiting India. "This is very important. The main issue is that the immigration is not an isolated subject but it is directly or indirectly linked to various issues.

The bill will ensure a close monitoring of everyone who visits India, why do they visit India and how long they want to stay in India. It is absolutely necessary to know



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament in New Delhi on Thursday

the details of every foreigner visiting India," he said after over the threehour-long debate.

Shah said the legislation will ensure the country's security, boost economy and business besides encouraging the health and education sectors. "I welcome everyone who wants to visit India as a tourist, for education, for health care, for R&D, for business. But those who comes as a threat to the country, we will keep a close look at them and take strong action against them," he said.

The Home Minister said the bill will strengthen the country's security and help India become the most developed

nation in the world by 2047. "I want to assure the country that we will have upto-date information about every foreigner coming to our country," he said According to the bill, anyone found to be using a forged passport or visa for entering India or staying in or exiting from the country will be punishable with a jail term of upto seven years and a fine to the extent

The proposed legislation also provides for mandatory reporting of information about foreigners by hotels, universities, other educational institutions, hospitals and nursing homes to enable tracking of overstaying foreigners.

# Dhankhar rejects privilege notice against Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

**q** ajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday rejected a Dhankhar on Thursday rejected a privilege notice against Union Home Minister Amit Shah after the minister cited a 1948 government press release to authenticate his statement that a Congress leader was part of the management of the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

In his ruling on Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh's breach of privilege notice, Dhankhar said Shah did not commit any "transgression" and that his statements during a debate earlier this week were in "absolute adherence to truth".

He went on to state that the breach of privilege was invoked in haste to get traction in the media and asked the House Ethics Committee to lay down fresh guidelines on MP's conduct on issues such as releasing communication with the chair or notices served.

Ramesh had moved the notice against Shah for "casting aspersions" on Congress Parliamentary Party head Sonia Gandhi while replying to a debate on the Disaster Management Bill, 2024 in Rajva Sabha on Tuesday. Dhankhar said when some members objected to his assertion, Shah agreed to authenticate his statement.

The Home Minister, he said, has backed his statement by producing a January 24, 1948 press release issued by the government's Press Information Bureau (PIB) that announced the then prime minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's

announcement of setting up of PMNRF.

The fund "will be managed by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the President of the Indian National Congress, the Deputy Prime Minister and there are some other Members," Dhankhar said quoting from the release produced in support of Shah's statement.

"I have carefully gone through the debate and what the Union Home Minister asserted, the Home Minister focused in categorical terms that this was the practice," he said.

"I find there has been no transgression. There has been absolute adherence to truth which is vindicated by a document that is available to the Hon'ble Members and that being the situation, I cannot persuade myself to accord any acceptance to this Notice of Question of Privilege against Shri Amit Shah, Minister of Home Affairs," he said.

Ramesh had on Wednesday moved a privilege motion against Shah for making "unfounded allegations" against Sonia Gandhi with a "premeditated motive to

"Even though the Home Minister did not take the name of Sonia Gandhi, he had categorically by implication referred to her and imputed motive to her. The Home Minister had made unfounded allegations against Sonia Gandhi with a premeditated motive to malign her reputation. The Home Minister's statement is blatantly false and defamatory," he had said in the letter.

Ramesh quoted a statement Shah made

on Tuesday while replying to a debate on the Disaster Management Bill, 2024 in Rajya Sabha.

The Prime Minister's National Relief Fund was established during the Congress' rule, and the PM-CARES Fund was established during PM Narendra Modi and the NDA's rule. Sir, during Congress' rule only one family used to control the country," Shah had said. Without naming anyone, Shah claimed that a Congress leader was part of the PM's relief fund at the time.

Dhankhar said breach of privilege is a serious matter. "I have declined with a deep sense of anguish and pain that we rushed to invoke breach of privilege. We rush to the media, give it traction, try to tarnish image. And I have said on a number of occasions, this House will not be a platform to ruin reputations of people,"

He then referred to the formation of the Ethics Committee in 1998 and it under S B Chauhan in a report stating that members must conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the dignity of Parliament and preserves their personal credibility. Also, members must bear the responsibility of maintaining exemplary standards of morality, dignity, decorum and values in their public conduct. "I am tasking the Ethics Committee to look into S B Chauhan Committee report on ethics and take note of the intervening situations mostly brought about by technological developments and social media and evolve our mechanism, fresh guidelines for members for adherence," he added.

## Two more **Hurriyat groups** quit separatism says Amit Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delh

nion Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said two more constituents of the Jammu and Kashmir-based Hurriyat Conference have discarded separatism and reposed their faith in the new Bharat built by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This development comes a couple of days after similar announcements made by two other affiliates of the separatists' conglomerate. On Tuesday, Jammu and Kashmir People's Movement (JKPM) and the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Political Movement (JKDPM) announced the severing of all ties with separatism. Shah said under the Modi government,

separatism is breathing its last and the triumph of unity is echoing across Kashmir.

Another great news from Kashmir Valley. Two more groups affiliated with the Hurriyat, namely J&K Tahreeqi Isteqlal and I&K Tahreek-I-Istigamat, have discarded separatism and reposed their trust in the new Bharat built by PM Shri @narendramodi Ji," Shah said in a social media post. In a statement, J&K Tehreeqi Isteqlal chairman Gulam Nabi Sofi said he and his organisation disassociated from the Al Parties Hurriyat Conference or any other group with the relevant ideology.

"We continued our struggle despite all odds but neither All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) (G) nor APHC (M) has been able to meet the expectations of the common masses. They failed at every step to represent the people's aspirations and sentiments. I have long ago severed my ties with separatist ideology and today I officially denounce it," he said

Sofi also said he is a true and committed citizen of India and believes in the Indian Constitution. "Neither in the past I have been associated with any act that is detrimental to the interests of India nor do I or my organisation intend to be a part of any group or forum which will work or has been working against India in future,"

In a separate statement, J-K Tehreek-I-Istiqaamat chairman Ghulam Nabi War too said he and his party are no longer associated with the APHC (G) or (M) or any other ideology that works against the interests of India. War said the Hurriyat had lost ground and was unable to meet the expectations of the people of J-K. "They failed at every step to represent the people's aspiration's and sentiments. I have long ago severed my ties with separatist ideology and today, I officially sever my connections from it," he said.

## **Opposition demands answers** on Justice Varma cash row

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

pposition members in Parliament on Thursday raised the issue of the alleged discovery of cash from the residence of Justice Yashwant Varma, with Congress MP Manish Tewari demanding that Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal make a statement in the Lok Sabha as to what actually transpired. Bringing up the issue during the Zero

Hour, Tewari said the reports about alleged aberrations in the judiciary have disturbed the conscience of all right-thinking citizens across the country. However, it is too premature to apportion guilt or otherwise, he said. Tewari

noted that Parliament is charged with the

responsibility of exercising superintendence and oversight over the judiciary. "While the Chief Justice of India has appointed an in-house inquiry, I think we should respect the process and wait for that report. However, in the meantime, the law minister should come to this House and must relay the chronology of events as they have transpired," the Chandigarh MP said. "Nobody is saying that anyone is innocent or guilty. Nobody is trying to apportion guilt. Let the in-

house inquiry process play itself out. But

under articles of the Constitution and the Judge's (Inquiry) Act, this Parliament has the responsibility of exercising that superintendence," Tewari said.

Raising the issue, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee said unaccountable money has been recovered from a judge of the Delhi High Court "Judges are also public servants like us. Why any investigation will not commence if a complaint of corruption is made against a judge irrespective of the fact that the chief justice of India grants permission or not," he asked. "Why the Lokpal will not be allowed

to carry on an investigation when a complaint has come against a judge who is a public servant like us? This judge has been transferred from Delhi High Court to the Allahabad High Court...Allahabad High Court and Calcutta High Court cannot be dumping grounds. All corrupt judges being sent to Allahabad and Calcutta High Courts," he said. Congress MP R Sudha also raised the issue during Zero Hour and said that an English daily published the story on the alleged incident about a week after the incident. 'There have been curious developments since then. Fire service and police report to the Union (home) minister; when did he come to know, and why did he keep silent even though Parliament was in session," she asked.

# Government giving priority to develope highways in J and K: Nitin Gadkari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

nderlining that the government has given highest priority to develop highways in Jammu and Kashmir besides north-east, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Thrusday said construction works worth ₹2 lakh crore are underway in J and K, where 105 tunnels are being constructed for ease of travel. The minister said the government is

also constructing a tunnel at Zojila, which would be the longest in Asia and to be located in a sub-zero temperature zone, while answering questions in the Lok Sabha. He said initially, the tunnel was esti-

mated to be constructed for over ₹12,000 crore, but it will be completed at just around ₹5,500 crore. Gadkari also invited Speaker Om Birla and other MPs to visit the site to see the engineering marvel of the Zojila tunnel.

He said the work on the Jammu-Srinagar highway is also under progress, where 36 tunnels will be constructed, of which works in 22 tunnels have been completed. He said once the work is com-



for ₹10 lakh crore, and it will help

pleted, the travel time between Jammu and Srinagar will be reduced to three to three and half hours instead of the current seven hours.

The minister said work on the expressway between Delhi-Katra is also in progress, and upon completion, the travel time between the two places will be reduced to half from the present 12 hours.

He informed the house a total of 25,000 km of two-lane highways in the country will be converted into four lanes

reduce accidents on the roads significantly. He also said 16,000 km of national highways will also be converted into six lanes for ₹6 lakh crore.

"We are planning to convert 25,000 km of two-lane highways into four-lane highways at a cost of ₹10 lakh crore. The DPRs (detailed project reports) of the projects are getting ready and we are hopeful to complete the work in two years," he saidduring Question Hour.

## Jaishankar stresses on India-Russia cooperation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Thursday in today's rapidly evolving order, India and Russia navigate a "complex geopolitical landscape" as he underlined that the "era of multipolarity" necessitates greater cooperation between

In an online video address to the conference — 'Russia and India: Towards a New Bilateral Agenda' — he said "further enhancement of the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia continues to be a shared foreign policy priority".

The conference is being hosted by the Russian International Affairs Council



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar makes remarks at the conference Russia and India: Towards New Bilateral Agenda

Moscow. Jaishankar said India "immensely values" its relationship with Russia and the two nations "remain committed to nurturing this deep friendship and exploring new frontiers of cooperation".

"This relationship with deep historical roots, and a long tradition of trust and mutual respect, continues to expand and deepen, in the backdrop of a dynamic world order," the external affairs minis-

Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov is also taking part in the conference.

Jaishankar said through "every shift in realignment, India and Russia have demonstrated an exceptional ability to adapt and to find new opportunities for mutual benefit, and for contributing to regional and global stability and prosper-

India-Russia diplomatic engagements continue to be marked by frequent highlevel exchanges, robust institutional mechanisms, and a commitment to each other's core interests, he said.

"In today's rapidly evolving order, India and Russia navigate a complex geopolitical landscape. The era of multipolarity necessitates greater cooperation between our two nations," the external affairs minister said.

He further said while areas like energy, defence and civil nuclear cooperation have traditionally "dominated our engagements", trade, technology, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, connectivity and digital economy are emerging as "new

points of collaboration". India and Russia have set an ambitious target of increasing bilateral trade to a USD 100 billion by 2030, he said.

"Investments by both sides in each other's economies continues to grow. Our participation in multilateral forums such as the BRICS, the SCO and the G20, and our collaboration at the United Nations and other international platforms, underscores the comprehensive nature of cooperation between India and Russia," Jaishankar said. The external affairs minister also emphasised on the "deeprooted cultural and people-to-people connections" that India and Russia share.

Russian scholars and intellectuals have long shown interest in India's spiritual and philosophical traditions, while Indian students, artists, and filmmakers have found inspiration in Russia's literary and artistic heritage, he added.

## **Chile president** to begin five-day visit to India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

hile President Gabriel Boric Font will pay a five-day state visit to India beginning April 1 to explore ways to shore up bilateral cooperation in a number of areas including trade and defence. It will be Boric's first visit to India in his capacity as the president.

The Chilean leader is coming to India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday, announcing the trip. Boric will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, members of Parliament, senior officials, business associations, media and prominent Chileans involved in the India-Chile cultural connect.

"The forthcoming state visit of President Boric will provide an opportunity for the leaders to undertake a comprehensive review of bilateral ties, as well as to discuss regional and international issues of mutual interest," it said. Apart from New Delhi, Boric will also travel to Agra, Mumbai and Bengaluru before returning to Chile on

"President Boric will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 1, covering the entire gamut of India-Chile relations," MEA said in a statement. Prime Minister Modi will host a lunch in honour of the visiting dignitary.

The Chilean president will also hold discussions with his Indian counterpart Draupadi Murmu, who will host a banquet in his honour.

In Mumbai and Bengaluru, President Boric will meet the political leadership, business and industry representatives, startups, innovators and tech leaders. "India's relations with Chile have tradition-

ally been warm and friendly. Chile is an important partner for India in the Latin American region (LAC)," the

MEA said. 'The two countries have commonality of views on several international issues including UNSC reforms, climate change, renewable energy and terrorism. Chile is also an important trading partner for India in the LAC region," it said.

# Centre asks states to prepare for heatstroke cases amid rising temperatures

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

ith temperatures across the country soaring, the Centre has asked states to review the preparedness of health facilities for the management of heatstroke cases and heat-related illnesses. In a letter, Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava said with the onset of summer, an increase in the exposure to heat, including extreme conditions may occur.

Some places of the country have begun witnessing high temperatures, she noted while enclosing the Seasonal Outlook from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for summer 2025.

She drew attention to public health and clinical guidelines on 'Heat and Health' available on the website of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and requested states to disseminate these

guidance documents to all districts for effective preparedness of health departments and health facilities to prevent, manage, and monitor the health impact

Srivastava mentioned that from March 1 onwards, through daily surveillance, patient-level information on clinical diagnosis of heatstroke is being captured on Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) for all states and UTs. Training sessions in virtual mode have been conducted recently by the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health, NCDC, she said.

She asked them to ensure that these are carried forward with the training material provided by NCDC and that all health professionals are trained to report on Integrated Health Information Platform.

She highlighted that the daily heat alerts

generated by the IMD are shared by

NCDC with states and these alerts include forecasts of heat wave for the next three-four days may be disseminated promptly to all health facilities.

**The Union Health Secretary** said the guidance on developing heatstroke management units and emergency management of severe heat-related illnesses has been disseminated

"State, district, and city health departments may ensure the implementation of Heat-Health action plans and support in planning, managing and assessing response to heat along with other responding agencies," Srivastava stated. She urged the health departments of states and UTs

to continue efforts for sensitisation and capacity building of medical officers, health staff, and grass-root level workers on heat illness, Its early recognition and management. "Health facility preparedness must be reviewed for the availability of adequate quantities of essential medicines, intravenous fluids, ice packs, ORS and all necessary equipments to provide active, emergency cooling," she underlined. The Union Health Secretary said the

guidance on developing heatstroke management units and emergency management of severe heat-related illnesses has been disseminated. Availability of sufficient drinking water at all health facilities and the continued functioning of cooling appliances in critical areas must be ensured, she stressed. Highlighting fire safety measures, she said health facilities should conduct thorough inspections,

safety and electrical load audits and ensure fire NOC compliance. "Health facilities need to increase their resilience to heat by arranging uninterrupted electricity for the constant functioning of cooling appliances, installation of solar panels (wherever feasible), energy conservation measures and measures to reduce indoor heat through cool/green roofs (NDMA guidelines may be referred), window shades, shade outside etc. Rainwater harvesting and recycling plants may also be explored for self-sufficiency in water," she said.

Srivastava also urged states to utilise Education and Information, Communication (IEC) as well as community level awareness materials developed by the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health on the precautions to be taken by people to safeguard themselves against heat wave.

# Akhilesh softens stance on Rana Sanga

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE** Lucknow

n a bid to contain political fallout and prevent alienation of upper-caste voters, Samajwadi Party (SP) Chief Akhilesh Yadav has softened his stance on the controversy surrounding Mewar ruler Rana Sanga. Amid widespread outrage over SP MP Ramjilal Suman's remarks, Yadav clarified that Rana Sanga's valour and patriotism remain undisputed.

The Samajwadi Party believes in social justice and an egalitarian society. We aim to ensure dignity and respect for even the weakest sections of society," Yadav stated. "We are not questioning Rana Sanga's bravery or his devotion to the nation.

With Rajput groups protesting against Suman's remarks, the SP leadership has been forced into damage control. Yadav emphasised that the MP merely sought to highlight the one-sided nature of historical narratives. "Our intention was never to insult the Rajput community or any other group," he added.

Yadav also took a swipe at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing it of manipulating historical events for political gains and exploiting religious and caste divisions. "Certain aspects of history have always been used by the BJP for political benefit," he said.

The controversy has placed the SP in a precarious position. While the party has been pushing its PDA (Dalit, backward, and minority) strategy, it cannot afford to alienate upper-caste voters, particularly Rajputs. The backlash from the Karni Sena and other Rajput organisations compelled Yadav to issue clarifications, underscoring his attempt to balance competing voter interests.

Yadav further argued that historical interpretations should not dictate modern governance. "We cannot run a democracy based on historical events alone. The BJP government should focus on improving livelihoods, healthcare, and security instead of fueling divisive politics," he

Tensions escalated further when Dalit organisations rallied behind Suman after his Agra residence was attacked by Rajput protesters. They condemned the attack as an instance of oppression against Dalits, adding another layer to the political battle.

While downplaying Suman's statement on Rana Sanga, Yadav asserted that the MP's house was attacked because he belongs to the Dalit community. In response, SP workers staged a protest in Lucknow against the attack but refrained from commenting on Rana Sanga, instead framing the issue as a caste-based assault.

Meanwhile, the BJP has positioned itself as the defender of Hindu warrior legacies, advocating for greater recognition historical figures like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, whom it argues have been undervalued in history.

The party has been actively promoting the construction of memorials and museums in Shivaji's honor while simultaneously targeting Mughal rulers like Babur and Aurangzeb.

During a recent event in Agra, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reinforced this narrative, stating that Agra's identity should be linked to Chhatrapati Shivaji rather than the Mughals. Against this backdrop, Suman's remarks in the Rajya Sabha on March 21 triggered a political storm, drawing severe backlash on social media.

The controversy has also revitalized the Karni Sena, which had been on the fringes of political relevance. Angered by Suman's comments, Karni Sena activists marched to his residence, following through on their protest threats. The episode has thrust the organisation back into the spotlight, positioning it as a champion of Rajput interests.

As political dynamics shift in Uttar Pradesh, the Rana Sanga controversy has evolved beyond a historical debate — it has become a battleground for vote banks and political narratives in the lead-up to the



Children from a government rehabilitation centre being treated at Lok Bandhu Raj Narayan

## Four children die of suspected food poisoning in Lucknow

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE** Lucknow

our special needs children died and several others were hospitalised following suspected food poisoning caused by contaminated water at a rehabilitation center in Lucknow, officials said.

The incident occurred on Tuesday evening at the Nirvana Rehabilitation Center on Mohan Road in the Uttar Pradesh capital. Lucknow District Magistrate Vishak G confirmed that the deceased included two girls and two boys, aged between 12 and 17. Their bodies have been sent for post-mortem, and viscera samples will be preserved for further examination.

Dr Rajeev Kumar Dixit, Medical Superintendent of Lok Bandhu Raj Narayan Combined Hospital, stated that around 20 children from the center were brought to the hospital, suffering from severe dehydration. "All these children are mentally challenged. Despite our best efforts, two of them succumbed," he said. Two critically ill children were referred to another government hospital, while the condition of the remaining 16

Health officials revealed that more than 15 children suffered from diarrhea and

vomiting after consuming contaminated water. Two of the deceased children have been identified as Renu and Deepa. A medical team has been sent to the shelter home to monitor the health of the remaining residents.

Authorities are investigating the cause of the illness, with a post-mortem examination planned to determine the exact reason for the deaths.

The Lucknow DM stated that Nirvana Rehabilitation Center operates under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. A team under the supervision of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) has been deployed to the facility. Preliminary findings suggest that consumption of contaminated water led to the illness.

In response, officials have ordered immediate arrangements for safe drinking water at the center and a thorough cleaning of the water tank. The CMO has been instructed to ensure that all children receive medical examinations and the best possible healthcare facilities.

CMO Dr NB Singh confirmed that a health department team has examined 70 children at the rehabilitation center. Those in serious condition have been transferred to Lok Bandhu Hospital, where they remain under observation.

## **Puducherry Assembly budget** session adjourned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Puducherry

→he Budget session (2025-2026) of the Puducherry territorial Assembly was adjourned sine die on Thursday after holding sessions for 13 days. Earlier, the House unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to grant full statehood to Puducherry, which is currently a Union Territory. The resolution was initially tabled jointly by opposition DMK members R Siva, AMH Nazeem, Annibal Kennedy, Nagathiagarajan, and R Sendhil Kumar, along with Congress member M Vaithianathan and Independent member G Nehru alias Kuppusamy.

Members who spoke in support of the resolution strongly advocated for Puducherry to attain statehood. They argued that as a Union Territory, Puducherry faced "numerous challenges and administrative hurdles". They claimed the elected government had "limited powers and lacked administrative freedom."

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

mity International School,

Vasundhara, Sector-6, has been Conferred upon "Special Citation-

Atal Tinkering Labs" Award, by Piyush

Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and

Industry, during the National Intellectual

The award was received by Dr Amita

Chauhan, Chairperson, Amity

International Schools and Dr Atul

Chauhan, Chancellor, Amity Universities,

during a prestigious ceremony, held at

Expressing her extreme pleasure and

gratitude on this occasion, Dr Amita

Chauhan, Chairperson, Amity International Schools, averred, "We are

extremely honoured and privileged to

receive the "Special Citation-Atal Tinkering

Labs" by the Union Minister of Commerce

and Industry, Piyush Goyal. Amity

International Schools are widely recognised

for the outstanding achievement of the stu-

dents in various fields. The award is a tes-

timony to Amity's commitment to nation-

Property Award Function-2024.

Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

## BJP abandons Hindutva, resorts to 'Satta-jihad' ahead of Bihar polls, says Uddhav Thackeray

TN RAGHUNATHA Mumbai

day after the BJP launched the Saugat-e-Modi kits scheme ahead president Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday charged that the ruling BJP had "abandoned" Hindutva and resorted to "Satta-jihad" in the run-up to the Bihar The BJP's Saugat-e-Modi scheme, which

is being seen as a strategic move by the ruling party to woo the minority community ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls, is expected to benefit 32 lakh under-privileged Muslims across the country. Slamming the BJP for its Muslim

appeasement move resorted to ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls, Uddhav said, "This is not Saugat-e-Modi but Saugat-e-Satta. This initiative is only for the Bihar Assembly elections. If anything, the BJP has resorted to satta-jihad".

"These people are fake Hindutva proponents... The BJP should formally announce that they have abandoned Hindutva. In fact, the BJP is distributing

Office of the Controller General of Patents,

Design and Trade Marks, was bestowed

upon Amity International School Vasundhara, Sector-6, in appreciation of

providing continuous guidance to students

through ideation sessions led by mentors

and teachers, along with actively fostering

a culture of innovation in the school by

encouraging creative thinking, regularly fol-

lowing up on the novel ideas of young inno-

vators and facilitating intellectual proper-

Amity International School, Vasundhara

Sector-6, "The school has been one of the

first school to setup the ATL under the

mentorship and assistance of Niti Ayog,

Government of India. Since then, the

school has won accolades for projects

ideations, research paper, prototypes, paper

presentations in STEM, at the internation-

al, national, state and CBSE level, includ-

ing the patents and copyrights received for

the young innovators of the school."

According to Sunila Athley, Principal,

ty protection for developed prototypes.

'Saugat-e-Satta' to those whose houses were demolished by bulldozers and to many of those who lost their lives in communal riots," the Sena (UBT) chief said.

Accusing the BJP of practising double standards, Uddhav said, "They use Muslims as scapegoats when it suits them, but during the elections, they distribute sweets to them. Look at how these turncoats suddenly don skullcaps now. Before accusing me of abandoning Hindutva, remove the green color from your flag first".

Ripping apart the BJP further, the Sena (UBT) chief sarcastically asked: "Who will protect the mangalsutras of Hindu women now? Is there even a true Hindutva party left? Is 'Saugat-e-Satta' only for the Bihar and UP elections, or will it continue beyond that?"

Earlier, the Opposition parties like the Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati and Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Kirti Azad had come down heavily on the BJP for its Saugat-e-Modi, aimed at appeasing Muslims ahead of the Bihar Assembly polls. Taking to micro-blogging site "X", Congress national spokesperson Shama Mohammad had written on Wednesday: "After demonising the Muslim community, delivering hate speeches against them, making propaganda videos to target them, and bulldozing their homes, the BJP is now planning to distribute Saugat-e-Modi kits to 32 lakh Muslims on Eid. What a hypocritical drama".

Dubbing "Saugat-e-Modi" as a "political move", BSP chief Mayawati wrote on X: "While the BJP's announcement to send the Prime Minister's 'love message and gift' as 'Saugat-e-Modi' to 32 lakh poor minority families on occasions such as Eid, Baisakhi, Good Friday, and Easter may seem like a benevolent gesture, it only serves their political interests". Choosing to term the BJP's "Muslim

appeasement" scheme as "the joke of the day," Trinamool Congress (TMĆ) MP Kirti Azad said, "Have you seen crocodile's face? It appears as if the animal is smiling but when you go near, it will swallow you. The same scenario is with the BJP. The world knows about their acts, they have nothing to show. This is the biggest joke of the day".



Piyush Goyal confers award

Piyush Goyal during the National Intellectual Property Award Function-2024

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ME Kolkata

→ he Trinamool Congress is a party of thieves and "gaddars" (turncoats), Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari on said launching a blistering attack on Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her party men including TMC general secretary and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee.

Adhikari who alongwith a thousand BJP supporters on Friday gheraoed the district SP office at Baruipur in South 24 Parganas to protest against last week's attack on his convoy at the same place police force in Bengal has turned into a rupt IPS officers have sold their morality to the TMC leadership."

TMC party of thieves, 'gaddars': Suvendu Adhikari

Man kills four children before hanging himself in UP

Terming the TMC a party of thieves and the Chief Minister the biggest "gaddar" (turncoat) of earth Adhikari said, "they often call me a "gaddar" but truth to be told Mamata Banerjee is the biggest gaddar on earth ... before telling others she should remember how she ditched former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress that made her the president of Youth Congress ... then she should also remember how she betrayed then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who gave her so much honour — when she was lit-Adhikari said how "a large majority of the erally loitering on the roads — by picking her from their and making her an

she calls me a gaddar because I have left her party of thieves ... the TMC is a party of thieves its leaders are all thieves from top to bottom.

Adhikari's statement came hours after he demanded equal treatment for the members of all the religious sects insofar as ogranising Iftar parties inside Government run educational institutions is concerned.

Questioning the reasonability of organising Iftar parties inside Government educational institutions particularly colleges, State Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari has asked the Mamata Banerjee Government to "remember the appeasement politics that you are playing today because we will not allow you to forget it during the Durga Pujas when the Hindus

will demand similar treatment from you." Saying that he had no objection in organising Iftar parties in places where they had been taking place from a long

period Adhikari said, "I have reservations about setting a new trend of organising Iftars in newer areas so as to create a new tradition of appeasement politics ... all to garner votes and all to create a polarised atmosphere in Bengal." Asking the Chief Minister to remem-

ber what she was doing to appease the members of a particular religion Adhikari said, "just remember what you are doing today ... because the BJP will demand a similar treatment for the Hindus during Durga Pujas ... we will ask you to organise similar Vijay Dashami celebrations after the Durga Pujas."

### to Amity Internatonal School batch of foot licking sidekicks of Abhishek important member of the Union Cabinet building through Research and Innovation, Banerjee. This is because a section of cor- ... then she betrayed the BJP ... and now which is the main focus area at Amity." This award, after rigorous scrutiny by the

SAJID KHAN 
Shahjahanpur

quiet village in Shahjahanpur district was shaken by a horrifying crime when a 36-year-old man brutally murdered his four children before taking his own life. The tragic incident, which occurred on Wednesday night in Manpur Chachri village under the Roja police station area, has left the entire community in deep sorrow and disbelief.

According to Superintendent of Police (SP) Rajesh Dwivedi, the accused, Rajiv Kumar, used a sharp-edged weapon to slit the throats of his three daughters — Smriti (12), Kirti (9) and Pragati (6) - along with his son, Rishabh (4). After carrying out the gruesome act, he moved to another room in his house and hanged himself. The police believe that the killings happened late at night when the children were asleep.

The incident came to light early Thursday morning when Rajiv's father, who lived separately, became concerned after noticing that the house remained locked from the inside. Around 7 am, he climbed onto the terrace and entered through a side passage, only to be confronted with the horrifying scene. Shocked and devastated, he immediately alerted the police.

Initial investigations suggest that Rajiv had been struggling with mental health issues following a severe head injury sustained in an accident a year ago. He had been undergoing treatment, and his family members reported that he often displayed signs of aggression and mood swings. His deteriorating mental state might have contributed to the violent act, though a final conclusion will be drawn after further investigation.

Adding to the family's troubles, Rajiv's wife had reportedly left for her parental home on Wednesday. While the exact reason for her departure remains unclear, police are probing whether any domestic issues played a role in the tragedy.

During the crime scene investigation, the police recovered the sharp weapon Rajiv had used, along with a sharpener, indicating that he had deliberately honed the blade before attacking his children. The bodies have been sent for postmortem examination to confirm the exact cause and time of death.

SP Dwivedi stated that forensic experts are analysing the crime scene, and statements from relatives and neighbors are being recorded to understand Rajiv's state of mind in the days leading up to the incident.

The brutal killings have cast a pall of gloom over the village. Neighbors, relatives, and locals gathered outside the family's house in shock, unable to comprehend how a father could commit such a heinous act against his own children. Many described Rajiv as a troubled man but never imagined he was capable of such extreme violence.

The police are continuing their investigation into the possible triggers behind the crime while also offering psychological support to the grieving family. Authorities have urged people to seek help in times of distress and not hesitate to reach out for medical and emotional support.

## MP Congress witnesses rare coordination between AICC in-charge, state party chief

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

or the first time in years, the Madhya Pradesh Congress is witnessing rare coordination between the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge and the state party chief. This newfound synergy between AICC's Madhya Pradesh in-charge, Harish Choudhary and state Congress president, Jitu Patwari, marks a significant shift from the past, when tensions and power struggles frequently plagued the party's leadership in the state.

Jitu Patwari, who had faced considerable difficulties during the tenure of his predecessor, Jitendra Bhanwar Singh, was rumored to have expressed his dissatisfaction to the party high command, even pushing for a change in leadership. His current rapport with Choudhary, therefore, signals a departure from the strained relationships that had become the norm in

Even before Jitendra Bhanwar Singh, previous AICC in-charges struggled to

establish a productive working equation with the state leadership. During Kamal Nath's tenure as PCC chief, senior Congress leaders such as Deepak Babaria, Mukul Wasnik, JP Agrawal, and Randeep Singh Surjewala held the position of state in-charge, yet none managed to maintain a smooth relationship with him.

Despite this promising development, Harish Choudhary faces a considerable challenge in navigating the power dynamics within the state unit. Weighing on his mind is the question of how he will manage his interactions with towering party figures such as Kamal Nath, Digvijaya Singh, Arun Yadav, and Kantilal Bhuria.

Being relatively junior to these leaders, Choudhary lacks the influence and political heft that his predecessors enjoyed.

His background as a minister in Rajasthan, rather than as a Congress heavyweight at the national level, only adds to the perception that he may struggle to assert his authority over the state's seasoned leadership. Unlike previous in-charges



AICC's Madhya Pradesh in-charge Harish Choudhary

who were well-connected within the been particularly weak. In Satna, he held party's power structure, Choudhary is seen as an outsider with limited access to the high command's inner circles.

There is growing speculation that he may find it difficult to summon senior leaders for discussions or enforce key decisions. Even after a month in his new role, he is yet to engage with the media to address issues concerning the party's Madhya Pradesh unit.

However, Madhya Pradesh Congress Media In-charge Mukesh Nayak has assured that Choudhary will soon meet senior leaders and initiate discussions on

pressing matters. Amid these internal challenges, Choudhary has embarked on a strategic tour of the Vindhya region, a crucial political battleground where the Congress suffered heavy losses in the 2023 Assembly

elections. His visit is seen as an attempt to revive the party's dwindling influence in con-PIONEER PHOTO stituencies where its performance has

a detailed discussion with former Leader of the Opposition, Ajay Singh, who reportedly shared insights into the factors that contributed to his defeat in the 2018 Assembly elections. Singh's struggles have been a cause for concern, having also lost two consecutive Lok Sabha elections.

Choudhary's presence alongside PCC Chief Jitu Patwari and MLA Ajay Singh during this visit underscores the party's efforts to consolidate its position ahead of future electoral battles.

After covering Satna on Wednesday, he moved to Rewa on Thursday and is set to conclude his tour in Singrauli on Friday.

While the visible camaraderie between the PCC chief and the AICC in-charge is an encouraging sign, the real challenge lies in translating this internal unity into electoral success. Whether Choudhary can bridge the divide between the party's senior leadership and grassroots workers, while also revitalising its prospects in Madhya Pradesh, remains an open question.







# Eight years of transformation

Yogi Adityanath's leadership has ushered a paradigm shift in Uttar Pradesh

s Yogi Adityanath completes eight years as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the State's remarkable transformation stands as a testament to his governance. Once plagued by poor law and order and sluggish economic growth, Uttar Pradesh has now emerged as a hub of development, security, and industrial expansion. Through a strong focus on governance, infrastructure, and welfare, Yogi Adityanath has successfully turned the State into an engine of progress.

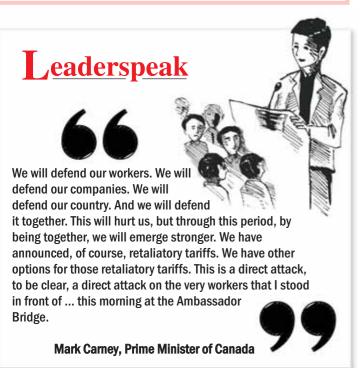
Uttar Pradesh was once notorious for its high crime rate and ineffective law enforcement. Under Yogi Adityanath's leadership, a stringent crackdown on crime has led to a drastic reduction in criminal activities. The establishment of police commissionerates in seven districts and the creation of the Special Security Force (UPSSF) have significantly bolstered law enforcement efficiency. More than 222 criminals have been neutralised in encounters, and over 8,000 have been injured in police operations.

One of the most significant transformations under Yogi Adityanath has been in infrastructure development. Seventeen cities have been developed as Smart Cities, and 125 new municipal bodies have been established. Six expressways have been completed, with 11 more under construction, enhancing connectivity across the State. The much-anticipated Jewar airport, set to be operational soon, will further boost transportation and trade. Cities like Noida, Greater Noida, Lucknow, Kanpur, and Agra now feature well-developed metro networks, revolutionising public transport.

Uttar Pradesh's agricultural sector has witnessed unprecedented progress over the past eight years. The State has become India's largest producer of fruits and vegetables, surpassing four crore tonnes annually. Under the PM KUSUM scheme, 76,189 solar pumps have been distributed to farmers, while 27 modernised agricultural markets have been established to ensure better price realisation. A major highlight of the Government's tenure has been the strengthening of power infrastructure. Rural areas now receive 20 hours of electricity, while district headquarters enjoy 24-hour power supply. Initiatives such as the Ayodhya Solar City project and the Bundelkhand Expressway solar corridor are paying the way for Uttar Pradesh to become a leader in green energy.

The Yogi Government has prioritised welfare schemes aimed at uplifting marginalised communities. Over 56 lakh houses have been built, and 2.62 crore toilets constructed under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. During the COVID-19 pandemic, free ration was provided to over 14.7 crore people, while 1.86 crore LPG connections were distributed, promoting clean cooking fuel in households.

Uttar Pradesh has also witnessed a surge in religious tourism and cultural development. The construction of the Ram Mandir in Avodhya and the transformation of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor have reinforced the State's spiritual identity. Events like the Kumbh Mela have attracted record-breaking numbers, solidifying UP's position as a premier destination for religious tourism. Healthcare infrastructure has seen major advancements, ensuring improved medical facilities across the state. Under the Jan Arogya Yojana, over 49 lakh families have received free health insurance. Additionally, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a major economic hub, now contributing 45 per cent of India's total mobile manufacturing output. Yogi Government's investor-friendly policies have attracted significant domestic and international investments, fostering industrial growth. From restoring law and order to driving economic growth and infrastructure development, the State has set a new benchmark for governance and progress under under the dynamic leadership of Yogi Adityanath. While challenges remain, the foundation has been laid for Uttar Pradesh to continue its journey toward becoming one of India's most developed States.



# The game changer in world trade

The India-MiddleEast-Europe Economic Corridor could revolutionise the world trade and can be an answer to China's 'Belt and Road Initiative'

he India-Middle-East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is one of the strategic breakthrough ideas of the 21st century for economic and transcontinental relationships across the globe. Never since the Belt and Road Initiative has such a serious attempt been made to define trade across land, sea, and human habitation

If successful, global trade will never be the same again. IMEC consists of two main segments: the East Corridor, which connects India to the Middle East, and the North Corridor, which links the Middle East to Europe. In the first case, the route travels through sea and land across the territorial jurisdictions of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, and in the case of the north corridor, it links the Middle East to Europe via Israel and Greece. Put together, it enhances supply chain efficiencies exponentially.

Put simply, it builds up technological advancement, moving it towards sustainable commerce. It will affect the availability of global clean energy and alter living styles to eliminate fossil fuels.

The use of fibre optics at this scale has never been attempted before. The Belt and Road Initiative would not have the technological bite or the potential for a breakthrough in energy initiatives.

Put simply, the corridor involves eight key participants: India, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Jordan, Israel, France, Germany, and Italy. The support of the US is crucial. The shipping time is reduced, and regional cooperation is key.

The advantages are, of course, reduced transit times, taking the content of shipment beyond the Suez Canal and building upon energy and digital technologies. The outcome would be a seminal impact coupled with economic input.

Linking up Middle East partnerships with European Union connectivity is set to redefine global commerce. Economic diversification will follow.

In this era, reduced timing is the key to development. Ports, shipping, and multimodal connectivity hold the key. Many feel that it takes the principle of 'neighbour-hood first' beyond rhetoric and creates new partners in the domain of international

The kind of parallel investments required, in cognate areas, could well redefine the nature of investments which trade and commerce would require. The existing sea routes require a newer kind of some sectors may become necessary. This would require new standardisation and a revision of areas such as the Motor Vehicles

So far, the talk has been, predominantly, of an undersea grid, the time has come to act on it. Put simply, one approach, one focus, one grid could become a reality, and green hydrogen would be a matter of routine. Standards and styles of living will get impacted.

Human Resources Development would be linked to trade and connectivity, and the nature of education will further change to link up with the needs of many nations including the Middle East.

Some have envisaged the possibility of skill corridors. Such an intervention takes time and requires a conversation beyond intellectual protocols.

Much of the rollout will depend on how skills are organised amid concerns of localisation and cross-border flows. Skilled manpower riding on the strength of hard



bring cultures closer together and make IMEC not only an economic warhorse but also a way to link skills with resources. Along with connectivity and energy projects, the whole process will require more agile banking and

finance. It may become a surrogate for commerce in parts of the long link between India and Europe through which this route will traverse.

Partnership for Global Infrastructure & Investment (PGII)

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

वर्ववय कुनुस्थकम्

All this would have an impact on cross — border transfers of money. Digital exchanges would receive a push to ensure commerce grows along with human

There are other possibilities that may be difficult to forecast at this stage. Illustratively, Iraq has shortlisted 11 intershipping, and internal harmonisation in infrastructure, could enable IMEC to national firms to operate the Grand Faw

Port. These include China Merchants Port Group, Adani, ICTSI, Cosco, ABM Global Shipping, and more. A decision is anticipated in early 2025.

It would be natural to consider alternate proposals across the length of a link from India to Europe, and the Turkish President has some views on this. He has felt unhappy about the proposal bypassing Turkey. The result has been talk of the 'Iraq Development Road Project,' but that is another story.

The India - Middle East - Europe Economic Corridor could revolutionise the world trade as it has the potential to not only ease the trade but also increase the world connectivity. Put simply, here is the possibility where an economic corridor redefines the future of trade and commerce for well over half a century and possibly more. It may be an idea well worth supporting, observing constructively, and more.

(The writer is an internationally acclaimed management consultant. Views expressed are personal)

# Debunking myths around cancer

ancer is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, with millions of new cases reported each year. In 2022 alone, approximately 20 million new cancer cases were diagnosed globally, and 9.7 million lives were lost to the disease. In India, the numbers are equally alarming, with around 100 out of every one lakh people diagnosed with cancer. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), more than 14 lakh cancer cases were estimated in 2023.

Despite advancements in early detection and treatment, many myths surrounding cancer testing prevent people from undergoing timely screening. These misconceptions can delay diagnosis, leading to more complicated treatment procedures and poorer outcomes.

## Common myths about cancer testing

A. Cancer screening is necessary only if there are symp-

Most people believe they should be tested for cancer only if they have some symptoms. Many cancers, including breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer, go undetected in very early stages. Regular screenings, such as mammograms, pap smears, and colonoscopies, usually identify problems before the cancer becomes major, thus



greatly increasing survival chances. B. A biopsy can cause the spread of cancer:

One of the longest-living myths states that biopsies can cause the spread of cancer. This myth keeps patients away from opting for critical diagnostic treatment. Doctors follow strict guidelines to ensure that the biopsy is done in such a way that the spread of any cancer cells is avoided. Scientifically, it has been acknowledged that biopsy procedures are safe and integral to establishing a correct diagnosis.

C. Cancer tests are inaccurate and yield false positives: specific tests may not be considered accurate, but contemporary cancer screenings are reliable enough to be considered correct. Rule-out tests often deal with false-positive results to confirm the diagnosis. These tests have their maximum chance of success when done at early detection, which outweighs their minimum chances of being wrong.

D. If no one in my family has cancer, I don't need screening: Family history can elevate the risk for some cancers, but most cancers occur in people without genetic predisposition. Cigarette smoking, poor dietary habits, and lack of exercise strongly influence the development of most cancers. In other words, everybody should be screened.

## **Diagnosis and treatment**

Advancements in medical science have made early cancer detection more accurate and treatment more effective.

Screening very early lets doctors recommend less invasive procedures and better survival rates. Treatment options depend on the type of cancer and the stage at which it is diagnosed. Surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, immunotherapy, and targeted therapy are widely used treatments available.

Timely diagnosis can change treatment outcomes from positive to negative. Currently, cancer care is personalised. The treatment plan is derived from a combination of genetic markers, tumour types, and individual patient needs. The right medical interventions can control many cancers, providing better quality of life and survival rates. Moreover, exposing myths surrounding cancer tests goes a long way to boosting early detection. Awareness, education, health screenings, and medical intervention empower people to take charge of the health course.

Raising awareness about cancer screening and dispelling myths is crucial for early detection and effective treatment. Many cancers can be managed successfully if diagnosed in time, significantly improving survival rates. Regular screenings, informed medical decisions, and lifestyle modifications play a key role in cancer prevention and management. By prioritising education and proactive health measures, individuals can take control of their well — being. Early diagnosis saves lives, making it imperative to spread accurate information and encourage timely screenings.

(The writer is senior consultant and HOD, Histopathology - Oncquest Laboratories. Views expressed are personal)

# Letters to the Editor

## **Turkey's democracy in peril**

Madam — Refer to your editorial, "Turkey in turmoil" (March 26). Since coming to power in 2003, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) have systematically targeted political opponents, journalists, and activists. However, the arrest of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu marks a troubling escalation.

Imamoglu, a rising Opposition leader from the Republican People's Party (CHP), was detained on March 19 on corruption and terrorism — related charges, allegedly due to his ties with pro - Kurdish political groups.

His arrest came just before he was expected to be named the CHP's presidential candidate.

On March 23, an Istanbul court ordered his formal arrest, and the Interior Ministry swiftly removed him from officemaking him the fifth CHP mayor dismissed recently.

The move has triggered massive protests, as many see it as a politically motivated attack on democracy. In response, the CHP held an open primary election, claiming 15 million voters participated-a strong public rebuke of Erdogan's tactics. Erdogan, whose term ends in 2028, is constitutionally barred from running again unless snap elections are called or the Constitution is amended.

With no clear successor in the AKP, he may push for early elections to reset his term limits

AMARJEET KUMAR | HASARIBAGH

## Are we more civilised?

Madam — While Aurangazeb, the last Mughal Emperor to rule India who lived in the 17th century has been branded as uncivilised, uncultured and barbaric and a religious fanatic who allegedly demolished Hindu temples and hence, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal demanded removal of his tomb from Maharashtra.

But, we are now in the 21st century, four centuries after Aurangazeb died and we call ourselves more cultured, refined, educated and civilised than the likes of the 17th century Aurangazeb. Then how is it that our civilised and cultured mind has driven us to seek to dig out the remains in a tomb, kill people, torch their houses and business places and also intimidate women in the name of religion?

Further, we have also bulldozed the dwelling place of a person who is only alleged to have instigated people to revolt which again, is yet to be proved in the court.

This cruel and hasty act of the Maharashtra government has been highly condemned as barbaric not only by the opposition parties but also the Bombay High Court that has rightly halted the demolition.

This being the scenario, one should ask his conscience, who is more barbaric, the so called uncivilised 17th century ruler or we, who live in the 21st century and boast that we are more cultured and civilised?

## **Reservation reality check**

Madam — Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha and BJP President JP Nadda and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju claimed on the basis of a statement by Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar that he had talked about changing the Constitution to give reservation to Muslims. Has DK Shivakumar really said this? On the other hand, DK Shivakumar has called it a blatant lie and has warned of legal action.

Congress Chief whip in Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh has also given a privilege notice accusing JP Nadda and Kiren Rijiju of lying. But our lapdog media is not mentioning this denial and privilege notice of Congress. It is only discussing the allegation that Shivakumar has talked about giving reservation to

The whole country and the world is being forced to believe this today. But this is only half truth. The complete truth is that Muslim castes which are socially and educationally backward get reservation as recommended by Mandal Commission and approved by Parliament and Supreme Court.

Apart from this, poor Muslims can also get the benefit of reservation on economic basis. The history of Muslim reservation in Karnataka is quite old.

## JUSTICE, SENSITIVITY AND THE OUESTION OF WOMEN'S DIGNITY

ustice is not just about interpreting laws, it reflects a society's moral and ethical values. A controversial ruling by the Allahabad High Court, which stated that touching a minor girl's breasts and pulling her pajama string does not amount to rape or an attempt to commit rape, was not just a legal misinterpretation but a failure of justice. It minimised the trauma of the victim and sent a dangerous message about how crimes against women and minors are viewed in

the legal system. The Supreme Court's intervention in staying the verdict was more than a legal correction, it was a reaffirmation of justice and dignity. This decision reinforced the idea that crimes against women and children must not be trivialised under technical legal interpretations.

A just society is not only defined by its laws but by the way they are interpreted. Justice must be dispensed with sensitivity and fairness. When courts reduce sexual offenses to technicalities, they fail victims

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

minors cannot be excused by drawing artificial distinctions between molestation and attempted rape.

Any violation of bodily autonomy must be treated as a grave offense.

and weaken public trust. Crimes against

Women's dignity has long been upheld in Indian society, yet their safety is often compromised. When a court declares that pulling a minor's pajama string is not an attempt to commit rape, it emboldens predators and normalises unacceptable behaviour. Judicial decisions shape societal attitudes - when courts fail to uphold victims' dignity, they encourage impunity.

The Supreme Court's intervention restored faith in justice by ensuring that laws align with dignity, security, and equality. This decision was not just about legal precision but about moral responsibility. It reassures victims that the judiciary will stand for their rights and not trivialise their suffering.

**SACHIN TRIPATHI | SATNA** 

THARCIUS S FERNANDO I CHENNAI

JANG BAHADUR SINGH I JAMSHEDPUR

# Uttar Pradesh Unlocked by winds of change

My Government has an unwavering commitment to the relentless service, progress, and the State's transformation into Uttam Pradesh. Eight years is only a milestone in the transition of my State into Viksit Uttar Pradesh



evered Shri Atalji's words, "Kintu, apni dhyeya yatra mai hum kabhi ruke nahi, kisi chunauti ke sammukh, kabhi jhuke nahi..." perfectly embody my Government's unwavering commitment over the past eight years — dedicated to relentless service, progress, and the transformation of Uttar Pradesh. Guided by the principles of Kartavya Sadhana and "priority to the deprived," we have pursued a mission to ensure the security, prosperity, and upliftment of 25 crore citizens, overcoming challenges without pause or compromise.

Under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji's effective leadership, Uttar Pradesh has witnessed a remarkable transformation. The State once labelled BIMARU, is now a premier destination for business and investment. The mantra of good governance, a commitment to the welfare of the poor, the philosophy of Antyodaya, and the goal of a self-reliant Uttar Pradesh have reshaped the

State's identity, propelling it into "growth gear."

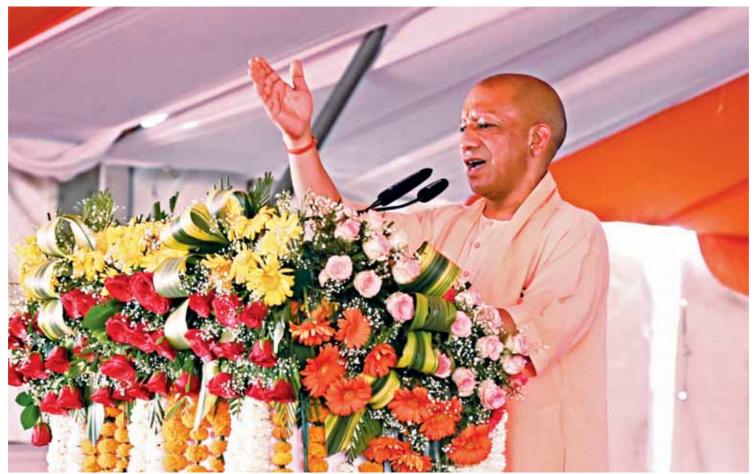
Uttar Pradesh's development journey is proof of turning vision into reality. We inherited a State plagued by lawlessness, disorder, and crime. Yet, through a secure environment, robust infrastructure, seamless connectivity, and businessfriendly policies, we have reshaped it into a thriving investment hub. In the past eight years, we have received investment proposals exceeding ₹45 lakh crore, with over ₹15 lakh crore already implemented. This has directly provided jobs to more than 60 lakh youth and created countless employment opportunities. It is well-established that security fosters development, while efficient connectivity accelerates progress.

The new Uttar Pradesh stands as living proof of this transformation. The timeless wisdom of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya — that true Antyodaya lies in uplifting the person at the bottom — forms the foundation of our Government's vision. Over six crore people have been lifted above the poverty line in the past eight years.

Under the Antyodaya model, 15 crore underprivileged citizens now receive free monthly food grains, 1.86 crore families have free gas connections, and over 2.86 crore farmers benefit from the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi every month. Additionally, 5.21 crore beneficiaries are covered under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, securing medical protection of up to ₹ five lakh, while over 56.50 lakh families have received free housing.

Unlocking Uttar Pradesh's potential requires a strong foundation of human capital. A significant transformation has taken

place in healthcare infrastructure — while there were only 12 medical colleges in the State until 2017, today there are 80, including 44 Government



and 36 private institutions. With AIIMS operational in Gorakhpur and Rae Bareli, the vision of "One District, One Medical College" is becoming a reality. Through Ayushman Bharat and other

healthcare initiatives, we are ensuring affordable, quality treatment for every citizen in their district.

Our farmers are the backbone of a self-reliant India. In the sugar sector, Uttar Pradesh now has 122 operational sugar mills. Since March 2017, three new mills have been established, six revived, and 38 expanded-creating employment for 1.25 lakh people. Sugarcane farmers have received payments totalling ₹2,80,223 crore, ₹66,703 crore more than what was disbursed in the 22 years between 1995

**ADITYANATH** 

A progressive society flourishes when its women are empowered. Over the past eight years, the Uttar Pradesh Government has remained

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IS AT** THE CORE OF OUR GOVERNANCE. FARMERS ARE THE ARCHITECTS OF

A SELF-RELIANT INDIA, OUR YOUTH THE DRIVERS OF TRANSFORMATION, AND MATRU SHAKTI THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SOCIETY. UTTAR PRADESH IS A THRIVING HUB OF TALENT, TRADITION, AND PROGRESS

steadfast in its commitment to ensuring women's security, dignity, and self-reliance through Mission Shakti. By offering free education up to graduation, we have expanded opportunities for young women, enabling them to pursue their aspirations without financial constraints. Additionally, initiatives like Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana, Nirashrit Mahila Pension Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, and PM Svanidhi Yojana have brought meaningful change, improving the lives of countless women across the State.

Economic empowerment is at the core of our governance. Over 95 lakh women in rural areas have been integrated into the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission, fostering financial independence. The allocation of 2,510 fair-price shops to women's self-help groups and the provision of rural residential records (Gharauni) in the name of female household members have ushered in a new era of dignity and economic progress for women.

The aspirations of our youth are taking flight.

Over 96 lakh MSME units have turned job seekers into job creators, reducing unemployment from 18 per cent in 2016 to just three per cent today. More than 8.5 lakh youth have secured Government jobs through a transparent recruitment process, including over 1.38 lakh women. The UP Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act has reinforced fair examination practices, instilling confidence in competitive exam aspirants.

These eight years have marked a historic era of renewed faith, economic strength, and cultural resurgence. The long-awaited return of Lord Shri Ram Lalla to his sacred temple is a momentous occasion after centuries of struggle. The grandeur of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the organisation of Mahakumbh, the development of Shri Ayodhya Dham, the rejuvenation of Kashi, and the beautification of Mathura-Vrindavan have placed Uttar Pradesh at the heart of India's spiritual revival.

Deepotsav and Rangotsav now shine with unmatched grandeur, drawing global visitors. Under the 'Reform, Perform, Transform'

mantra, Uttar Pradesh has become a premier destination for both religious and industrial tourism. Initiatives like the Ramayana circuit, Buddhist circuit, Spiritual circuit, Shaktipeeth circuit, Krishna or Braj circuit, Bundelkhand circuit, Mahabharata circuit, and Jain circuits have placed sacred centres like Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura, Chitrakoot, Saharanpur, Shravasti, and Gorakhpur on the global tourism map, offering world-class

Uttar Pradesh's economic success has been achieved without imposing any new taxes. Despite offering the lowest diesel and petrol rates in the country, the State is emerging as a revenuesurplus economy, driven by the ideals of Ramrajya. The 'One District-One Product' (ODOP) scheme has transformed every district into a thriving industrial hub, while major projects like the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor are establishing the State as *Udyam Pradesh* — a powerhouse of industry and innovation. Every citizen is a partner in this journey. Farmers are the architects of a self-reliant India, our youth the drivers of transformation, and Matru Shakti the foundation of our society. Uttar Pradesh is not just a State, it is a thriving hub of talent, tradition, and progress.

This milestone is just the beginning. Our vision is a Viksit Uttar Pradesh — one that not only becomes India's largest economy but also fulfils the aspirations of its 25 crore citizens. With unwavering commitment, we will continue our journey of transformation, ensuring prosperity for

(The writer is the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh)

# India and China walk a fragile tightrope at 75 years

the seeds of doubt between China and India were sown in the 20th century, with British attempts to align Tibet with British India, leading to the 1904 Expedition to Tibet, which the Qing Dynasty viewed as a direct affront to its sovereignty. By 1965, India (IB) and the CIA secretly planted a nuclear-powered surveillance device on Nanda Devi to monitor China's nuclear tests, but the mission failed, and the lost plutonium device, radioisotope thermoelectric generator, remains unaccounted for to this day, deepening the mistrust between the two nations.

On April 1, 1950, India became the first non socialist bloc country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. In a few days, we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of this relationship. Two giants — China and India occupy the heart of this vast and diverse landmass, their destinies irrevocably intertwined. As Wang Yi noted, Mao used the metaphor of a "cooperative pas de deux of the dragon and the elephant" to describe the importance of China and India working together harmoniously. With populations exceeding 2.85 billion, these nations wield the power to shape the future not only of Asia but of the entire world. Yet, despite their economic rise and deep historical connections, their relationship remains one of profound ambivalence, laced with suspicion, insecurity, and an unresolved legacy of conflict. If the peace in Asia is to hold, it hinges on this question: can India and China shed the weight of history and build a future of cooperation, respect, and stability?

The answer to this question is not as simple as it might seem. In the aftermath of the 1962 Sino-Indian War, India and China were forced into a narrative of hostility, which directly contradicted Nehru's bold assertion, "Hindi - Chini Bhai — *Bhai*"(Indians and Chinese are brothers).

The war, with its brutality and China's swift victory, continues to echo through the decades, its scars never fully healed. For India, China's military might have loomed large as an existential threat, shaping its foreign policy and strategic alliances. The West, particularly the United States, has become an increasingly important partner for India as the country seeks to counterbal-

ance China's rise in the region.

The spectre of the Sino - Indian War, an uncomfortable memory for the Indian psyche, serves as a continuous reminder of the unpredictable and dangerous nature of the bilateral relationship. China, for its part, remains largely indifferent to India's anxieties, with Nehru's words after the Sino-Indian War of 1962 continuing to haunt the Indian psyche: 'We were misled into thinking that China was our friend. We have been deceived into thinking that China would respect our interests and security. But they have shown their

Yet, despite tensions and the occasional flare —

ups of military skirmishes, particularly along the contested areas of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), it is clear that the trajectory of the Indo-China relationship is more nuanced than simple antagonism. Both nations have made remarkable strides in modernising their economies.

China's rise as an economic juggernaut, coupled with its geopolitical ambitions, has forced India to rethink its position in the world. However, India's rise has been slower and less controlled, hindered by domestic chaos, systemic corruption, and a democratic framework that, while empowering, often hinders swift and decisive decision-making. Unlike China, India succeeds, as Kishore Mahbubani put it, not because of its government, but despite it. This paradox defines Indian democracy: a system that operates in constant dys-

function yet still manages to deliver results.



India's struggles are evident in stark contrast to China's model of governance. In China, the centralised power of the Communist Party has allowed for rapid reforms unprecedented growth, lifting millions out of poverty and placing the country at the forefront of the global economic stage.

For China, this ascent has been marked by the pursuit of hegemony — asserting its influence over its neighbours through both economic means and military presence. India, on the other hand, has faced internal divisions that have stymied its

There is a bitter irony here. As India and China grow-albeit at different rates — the mutual suspicion between them only deepens. For India, China's meteoric rise is seen not just as an economic miracle but as a strategic and ideological threat. Meanwhile, China views India's increasing closeness with the West with wariness, sensing an attempt to encircle it, weaken its dominance, and tip the balance of power in Asia

These fears are not unfounded. India's deepening ties with the United States, the QUAD alliance, and its growing influence in the Indo – Pacific region have been framed by many in Beijing as a deliberate attempt to counter China's

Yet, in recent months, there have been signs of a shift. Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated the need to normalise relations with China — a statement that was both a recognition of the reality of the global order and a tacit acknowledgement that conflict between India and China would spell disaster not just for Asia but

Modi, in his effort to elevate India as a global power, has become acutely aware of the importance of stabilising ties with China, opting for dialogue over discord, healthy competition, and strategic focus.

His push for a more pragmatic approach-setting aside the past and focusing on the future-has met with mixed reactions domestically.

Indian nationalists, emboldened by their country's rise, have questioned the wisdom of making overtures to China, accusing the government of compromising India's sovereignty. But this is a necessary conversation — one that transcends partisan politics and jingoistic nationalism, focusing on what is best for India and Asia as a whole.

Despite their historical antagonisms, both nations are too enmeshed in the global economy to risk full-scale war. The rise of these giants presents a unique opportunity for the world's largest democracies to forge a united Asia, not one divided by rivalry but strengthened by shared prosperity. Yet this requires more than just diplomatic rhetoric — it demands a profound shift in mindset. India and China must overcome centuries old grievances and recognise that their fates are intertwined.

The future of Asia hinges on whether these two civilisations, long divided by borders, can rekindle an ancient spirit of cooperation. This is particularly crucial as BRICS, with India and China as key enablers in remapping the Global South, progresses with its vision to reshape the world

While differences remain, particularly over dedollarisation, the BRICS nations remain inseparable partners in addressing the urgent challenges ahead. Together, they aim to overcome the diminishing influence of the West, which is increasingly failing to hold its position in the global arena. If India and China fail to find peace, the entire continent risks becoming the tinderbox of a future global conflict.

The stakes have never been higher. India and China, two ancient civilisations and modern giants, stand at a crossroads. Their shared history is marred by conflict and mistrust, yet their futures are inextricably linked. As Asia's foremost powers, they must choose between rivalry and cooperation. Economic interdependence and global challenges demand pragmatic diplomacy,

Despite past tensions, recent diplomatic efforts signal a possible thaw in relations. If they can transcend their historical grievances, India and China have the potential to reshape the global order.

Their choice will determine whether Asia becomes a beacon of stability or a battleground for future conflicts. The stakes are immense.

> (The writer is a journalist based in Colombo. Views expressed are personal)

# **Indian Railways: Time to** move on bold, new tracks

¶he railway station — a place of countless goodbyes, new beginnings, and untold stories. It is where millions of dreams converge, where weary travelers especially farmers and habitants from Rural India find comfort, and where the pulse of the nation beats strongly. For many agriculturist and young Indians, the railway is not just a mode of transport — it is a bridge to opportunity, a passage to a better future. But what happens when that bridge becomes unsafe? What happens when the very place meant to carry dreams forward becomes a site of

The recent stampede at New Delhi Railway Station (NDLS), which resulted in loss of innocent lives, was more than just an accident — it was a wake-up call. It exposed the deep-rooted challenges of overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and the lack of modern safety measures at our busiest railway hubs. As India surges ahead in its ambition to become a developed nation by 2047, our railway system must evolve to match this vision. With rising aspirations, increased urban migration, and ever growing passenger numbers, we must ask ourselves-are we truly prepared for the future of Indian Railways?

Railways are the backbone of India's economy and social fabric, moving over 23 million people every day. But with great numbers comes great responsibility. If we want a railway network that is safe, modern, and capable of handling the rising demands of an ambitious India, we need urgent reforms in station design, crowd manage-

ment, and passenger experience. This is not just about preventing another stampede — it is about building an India where every journey is safe, efficient, and dignified. The question is — are our stations built for this future? If we do not act now, overcrowding will not just lead to safety hazards but will also diminish passenger experience, slow down economic mobility, and create bottlenecks in urban transport systems. One of the biggest concerns at NDLS is the unpredictability of passenger movement, leading to congestion, last — minute rushes, and logistical bottlenecks. In Tokyo's Shinjuku Station, the world's busiest, an AI — powered crowd tracking system monitors footfall density and suggests alternative routes in real time. Similarly, London's King's Cross Station utilises sensor — driven monitoring to optimise train schedules based on real-time crowd movement. For NDLS, integrating a dynamic crowd monitoring and predictive analytics system can help prevent sudden overcrowding by guiding passengers to less congested areas, improve safety through real — time alerts for emergency evacuation protocols, and minimise last-minute platform changes, which often lead to mass panic and dangerous stampedes. Additionally, station security should incorporate smart ticket verification zones ensuring only legitimate passengers enter the platform areas-a method

successfully used in Japan and China. Modernisation should not be limited to expand-

ing infrastructure — it must also focus on making railway stations safer and more inclusive for all. Railway stations in developed countries have incorporated gender — sensitive infrastructure, with separate waiting lounges for women, enhanced CCTV surveillance, and well-lit platforms ensuring safety, as seen in Stockholm Central Station in Sweden. NDLS should introduce safe zones for women and children, install AI-powered facial recognition sur-

veillance, and provide gender-neutral restrooms.

Hygiene and cleanliness remain significant challenges for Indian railway stations. NDLS should implement automated waste segregation units, self cleaning toilets, and bio — waste recycling units to create a hygienic transit environment. Water conservation measures, rainwater harvesting, and energy-efficient smart lighting will also contribute to sustainable station operations. To ensure a more sooth-

BINOD ANAND

ing and environmentally conscious railway experience, floriculture based waiting areas, vertical gardens, and air — purifying green walls can be introduced, like Oslo Central Station in Norway and Kyoto Station in Japan, which have successfully integrated green spaces into transit hubs. This will improve passenger well — being while making railway stations visually appealing. Indian railway stations generate massive amounts of organic waste daily, which can be con-

verted into clean energy, powering station lighting and operational functions

With solar roofing, and water conservation systems, India can lead a railway revolution based on green energy. Beyond infrastructure, railway security forces like the Government Railway Police (GRP) and Railway Protection Force (RPF) must transition from a purely enforcement — based role to a people — friendly support system. We must think beyond just building infrastructure and focus on making railway stations hubs of innovation, sustainability, and service. With AI - powered crowd control, bio - energy - driven efficiency, and a people — friendly railway police force, NDLS can become a global model for smart transit hubs. If executed well, railway modernisation will not only improve infrastructure but also transform millions of lives, ensuring that every journey taken on Indian Railways is safe, smooth, and full of dignity. In 2047, when India celebrates 100 years of independence, let our railway stations stand as monuments of progress, where no passenger fears for their safety, where no traveler is left stranded in overcrowded platforms, and where every Indian-rich or poor-feels proud of the journey they embark upon.

> (The writer is Executive President World Cooperation Economic Forum. Views expressed are personal



# WORLD 08

# Trump places 25 per cent tariff on imported autos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Washington

S President Donald Trump on Wednesday said he was placing 25 per cent tariffs on auto imports, a move the White House claims would foster domestic manufacturing but could also put a financial squeeze on automakers that depend on global supply chains.

"This will continue to spur growth. We'll effectively be charging a 25 per cent tariff," Trump told reporters.

The tariffs, which the White House expects to raise USD 100 billion in revenue annually, could be complicated as even US automakers source their components from

The tax hike starting April means automakers could face higher costs and lower sales, though Trump argues that the tariffs will lead to more factories opening in the United States and the end of what he judges to be a "ridiculous" supply chain in which auto parts and finished vehicles are manufactured across the United States, Canada and Mexico.

To underscore his seriousness about the tariffs directive he signed, Trump said, "This is permanent."

per cent in Wednesday trading. Ford's stock was up slightly. Shares in Stellantis, the owner of Jeep and Chrysler, dropped nearly 3.6 per cent.

Trump has long said that tariffs against auto imports would be a defining policy of his presidency, betting that the costs created by the taxes would cause more production to relocate to the United States while helping narrow the budget deficit. But US and foreign automakers have

plants around the world to accommodate global sales while maintaining competitive prices and it could take years for companies to design, build and open the new factories that Trump is promising.

"We're looking at much higher vehicle prices," said economist Mary Lovely, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

"We're going to see reduced choice. These kinds of taxes fall more heavily on the middle and working class.'

She said more households will be priced out of the new car market where prices already average about USD 49,000 and will have to hang on to aging vehicles.

The tariffs on autos would start being collected on April 3, Trump said.

If the taxes are fully passed onto con-Shares in General Motors fell roughly 3 sumers, the average auto price on an



imported vehicle could jump by USD 12,500, a sum that could feed into overall inflation. Trump was voted back into the White House last year because voters believed he could bring down prices.

Foreign leaders were quick to criticise the tariffs, a sign that Trump could be intensifying a broader trade war that could damage growth worldwide.

"This is a very direct attack. We will defend our workers. We will defend our companies. We will defend our country," Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has said. In Brussels, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen expressed regret at the US decision to target auto exports from Europe and vowed that the bloc would protect con-

"Tariffs are taxes bad for businesses, worse for consumers equally in the U.S. And the European Union," she said in a statement, adding that the European Union's executive branch would assess the impact of the move, as well as other US tariffs planned for coming days.

As Trump announced the new tariffs, he indicated that he would like to provide a new incentive to help car buyers by allowing them to deduct from their federal income taxes the interest paid on auto loans, so long as their vehicles were made in America. That deduction would eat into some of the revenues that could be generated by the tariffs.

The new tariffs would apply to both finished autos and parts used in the vehicles, according to a White House official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the taxes on a call with reporters.

The tariffs would be on top of any existing taxes and were legally based on a 2019 Commerce Department investigation that occurred during Trump's first term on national security grounds.

For autos and parts under the USMCA trade pact applying to the United States, Mexico and Canada, the 25 per cent tariffs would only apply to non-US content.

The administration is reasoning that there is excess capacity at US automakers that will enable them to ramp up production to avoid the tariffs by manufacturing more domestically, with the official noting that automakers have known since the Trump campaign that tariffs were coming.

The auto tariffs are part of a broader reshaping of global relations by Trump, who plans to impose what he calls "reciprocal" taxes on April 2 that would match the tariffs, sales taxes charged by other nations. Donald Trump has already placed a 20 per cent import tax on all imports from China for its role in the production of fentanyl.

He similarly placed 25 per cent tariffs on Mexico and Canada, with a lower 10 per cent tax on Canadian energy products. Parts of the Mexico and Canada tariffs

have been suspended, including the taxes on autos, after automakers objected and Trump responded by giving them a 30-day reprieve that is set to expire in April.

The president Donald Trump has also imposed 25 per cent tariffs on all steel and aluminum imports, removing the exemptions from his earlier 2018 taxes on the metals. He also plans tariffs on computer chips, pharmaceutical drugs, lumber and

# Canadian PM Carney calls US President's decision 'direct attack' on his country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Toronto

anadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Wednesday said that US ✓President Donald Trump's auto tariffs are a "direct attack" on his country and that the trade war is hurting Americans, noting that American consumer confidence is at a multi-year low.

Trump said earlier on Wednesday that he was placing 25 per cent tariffs on auto imports and, to underscore his intention, he stated "This is permanent".

'This is a very direct attack. We will defend our workers. We will defend our companies. We will defend our country," Carney responded.

Mark Carney said he needs to see the details of Trump's executive order before taking retaliatory measures.

Mark Carney also called the move unjustified and said he will leave the election campaign to go to Ottawa on Thursday to chair his special Cabinet committee on US relations.

Carney earlier announced a USD \$1.4 billion "strategic response fund" that will protect Canadian auto jobs affected by Trump's tariffs.

Autos are Canada's second largest export, and Carney noted it employs 125,000 Canadians directly and almost another 500,000 in related industries. "Canada will be there for auto workers,"

he said. Trump previously granted a one-month exemption on his stiff new tariffs on imports from Mexico and Canada for US

The president has plunged the US into a global trade war all while on-again, offagain new levies continue to escalate

The Conference Board reported on Tuesday that its US consumer confidence index fell 7.2 points in March to 92.9, the fourth straight monthly decline and its lowest reading since January of 2021.

"His trade war is hurting American consumers and workers and it will hurt more. I see that American consumer confidence is at a multi-year low," Mark Carney said earlier while campaigning in Windsor, Ontario, ahead of Canada's April 28 election.

The tax hike on auto imports starting April means automakers could face higher costs and lower sales.

Trump previously placed 25 per cent tariffs on Canada's steel and aluminum and is threatening sweeping tariffs on all Canadian products as well as all of America's trading partners on April 2. "He wants to break us so America can

own us. And it will never ever happen because we just don't look out for ourselves we look out for each other," Carney said.

Carney, a former two-time central banker, made the earlier comments while campaigning against the backdrop of the Ambassador Bridge, which is considered the busiest US-Canadian border crossing, carrying 25 per cent of all trade between the two countries.

It plays an especially important role in auto manufacturing.

Carney said the bridge carries USD 98 Billion in goods every year and USD 281 Million per day.

"Now those numbers and the jobs and the paychecks that depend on that are in question. The relationship between Canada and the United States has changed. We did not change it," Carney said.

In the auto sector, parts can go back and forth across the Canada-US border several times before being fully assembled in Ontario or Michigan.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford, whose province has the bulk of Canada's auto industry, said auto plants on both sides the border will shut simultaneously if the tariffs go ahead.

"President is calling it Liberation Day.
I call it Termination Day for American workers. I know President Trump likes to tell people 'You're fired!' I didn't think he meant US auto workers when he said it,"

Trump has declared a trade war on his northern neighbour and continues to call for Canada to become the 51st US state, a position that has infuriated Canadians.

Canadians booed Trump repeatedly at Carney election rally in Kitchener, Ontario. The new prime minister, sworn in March 14, still hasn't had a phone call with Trump. It is unusual for a US president and Canadian prime minister to go so long without talking after a new leader takes office. "It would be appropriate that the president and I speak given the action that he has taken. I'm sure that will happen soon," Carney said

## Asian shares sag after Trump raises tariffs chill from Trump's announcement.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Tokyo

nares sagged Thursday in Asia, apart from China, after President Donald Trump announced he will slap 25per cent tariffs on imported cars.

Trump said he was raising duties on auto imports to encourage more manufacturing in the US, but the impact will be complicated since US automakers and even foreign manufacturers with factories in the U.S. Source many of their components from around the world.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 lost 1per cent to 37,662.36. Toyota Motor Corp stock dove 3.2per

cent, while Honda Motor Co stock dipped 2.8per cent. Nissan was down 2.6per cent. Mazda Motor Corp shares dropped

6.5per cent, while those in Subaru Corp slipped nearly 6per cent and Mitsubishi Motors Corp lost 4per cent. Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba

has sought to persuade Trump to exempt

Japan from the higher tariffs, and he reitereated his position Thursday. "We strongly request that tariff measures not be applied to Japan," he told

When asked about possible responses, he said without giving specifics: "All

options are naturally subject to consider-Ivan Espinosa, who will become chief

executive at Nissan Motor Corp. April 1, told reporters earlier this week that the automaker was considering several scenarios as what Trump might do was "fluid." Toyota declined comment. South Korea's Kospi fell 1 per cent to

2,616.95. Korean automakers also felt a

Hvundai Motor Co.'s shares traded in Seoul lost 4.3per cent while Kia Corp.'s shares dropped 3.9per cent. Shares in Greater China, apart from

Taiwan, were higher. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 1per cent to 23,711.97, while the Shanghai Composite index was up 0.3per cent at 3,379.19. Chinese automakers and parts manu-

facturers have been expanding sales around the world, but not in the United States, so any impact from the tariffs announcement would be an indirect

## spread their production around North America following prior free-trade deals

**US** auto giants have already

But Taiwan's benchmark, the Taiex, sank 1.5per cent. In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 dropped

0.6per cent to 7,951.50. The S&P 500 sank 1.1per cent to

5,712.20 to break what had been a run of calmer trading.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average

swung from a gain of 230 points in the morning to a loss of 132 points, or 0.3per cent, closing at 42,454.79 Weakness for Big Tech sent the Nasdaq

composite to a market-leading drop of 2per cent, at 17,889.01.

high for its first "correction" since 2023.

The group of dominant stocks known as the "Magnificent Seven" has been at the center of the US stock market's recent selloff, which earlier this month took the S and P 500 10per cent below its all-time

Big Tech had rocketed in earlier years amid a frenzy around artificial-intelligence technology, and critics said their prices rose too quickly compared with their already rapidly growing profits.

Nvidia fell 6per cent to bring its loss for the young year so far to 15.5per cent. It was the single heaviest weight on the S&P 500 by far. Other AI-related stocks were also

weak, including server-builder Super Micro Computer, which fell 8.9per cent and power companies hoping to electrify AÎ data centers.

Tesla has been contending with additional challenges, including worries that political anger at its CEO, Elon Musk, will hurt the electric-vehicle maker's sales. Tesla dropped 5.6per cent to extend its loss for 2025 to 32.6per cent.

Other US automakers also declined after Trump said he would announce his tariffs on auto imports.

United States auto giants have already spread their production around North America following prior free-trade deals encompassing the United States, Canada and Mexico. General Motors sank 3.1per cent. Ford Motor went from an early gain to a loss and back before inching up by 0.1per cent.

So far, the economy and job market have appeared to remain solid despite the worsening moods of shoppers and busi-

Orders for machinery, airplanes and other long-lasting manufactured products unexpectedly grew last month, when economists were forecasting a contraction. But a subset of the data seen as an indicator for investment by businesses flipped from growth to contraction.

**UN lauds India's** 

child mortality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA United Nations

ndia's efforts and progress in reduc-

ing preventable child deaths has

been lauded as "exemplar" by the

United Nations, which cited the exam-

ple of health initiatives such as

Ayushman Bharat, and said the coun-

try has saved millions of young lives

through strategic investments in its

progress in

reduction

health system.

# **Putin accepts PM Modi's** invitation to visit India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi/Moscow

oting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first foreign visit after his re-election last year was to Russia, it said on Thursday now it's out turn while announcing President Vladimir Putin has accepted an invitation from Modi to visit. However, the dates of the visit have not been revealed yet. Announcing Putin's visit, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said preparations are underway for it. In a video address to a conference titled "Russia and India: Toward a New Bilateral Agenda" hosted by the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Lavrov said, "Arrangements are currently being made for Putin to visit India."

"Putin has accepted an invitation to visit from the Indian head of government. A visit by the Russian head of state to the Republic of India is currently being prepared," the Russian foreign minister was quoted as saying by the state-run TASS news agency. Lavrov noted that Prime Minister Modi's first foreign visit after his re-election last year was to Russia. "Now it's our turn," he said. The two leaders are expected to discuss

the Ukraine war as well as the geopolitical developments following Donald Trump taking over as US President.

India has maintained a neutral stance on the Ukraine conflict, even though Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly told Putin that it was not the era of war.

In fact, Modi was one of the few leaders in 2024 to visit both Moscow and Kyiv to meet Ukrainian President Zelenskyy. The PM also travelled to Russia's Kazan in October for the BRICS Summit. Prime Minister Modi visited Russia in July 2024, his first trip to the country in nearly five years. Earlier, he visited the far eastern city of Vladivostok in 2019 to attend an economic conclave. During the last visit, Modi invited Putin to visit India. On March 24, Lavrov said Russia is developing a "privileged strategic partnership"with India.

# US airstrike targeting Yemen's Houthi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Dubai

new American airstrike campaign against Yemen's Houthi rebels Against remens more intense and more was appears more intense and more was from solely tarextensive, as the US moves from solely targeting launch sites to firing at ranking personnel as well as dropping bombs in city neighbourhoods, a PTI review of the operation shows.

The pattern under US President Donald Trump reflects a departure from the Biden administration, which limited its strikes as Arab allies tried to reach a separate peace with the group. It comes after the Iran-backed Houthis threatened to resume attacking "any Israeli vessel" over the country's refusal to allow aid into the Gaza Strip.

The Houthi attacks and the response to them have drawn new scrutiny in Washington after security officials in Trump's administration shared plans for the first round of strikes on the rebels in a group chat that included a journalist. But bombing alone may not be enough to stop the Houthis, whose earlier barrage of missile fire toward the US Navy represented the most intense combat it had seen since

"Folks that say, 'We'll go in there and take out everyone with the last name Houthi and we'll win.' The Houthi leadership has been taken out in history in the past, and they are resilient," retired US Navy Vice Adm. Kevin Donegan said. They came back and they grew stronger. So this isn't something that is a one-anddone." Meanwhile, concerns are growing over civilians being caught in the middle

The pattern under US President reflects a departure from the **Biden administration, which** limited its strikes as Arab allies tried to reach a separate peace with the group

of the campaign. While the US military has not acknowledged any civilian casualties since the strikes began over a week ago, activists fear strikes may have killed noncombatants already in territory tightly controlled by the Houthis.

"Just because you can't see civilian harm doesn't mean it's not happening," warned Emily Tripp, the director of the UK-based group Airwars, which studies Western airstrike campaigns.

A new, intense US airstrike campaign shakes Yemen The Trump campaign began March 15.

American warships fired cruise missiles while fighter jets flying off of the USS Harry S Truman aircraft carrier dropped bombs on Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, a nation on the southern edge of the Arabian Peninsula that is the Arab world's poorest. "No terrorist force will stop American commercial and naval vessels from freely sailing the Waterways of the World," Trump said in a social media post announcing the campaign, days after his administration reimposed a "foreign terrorist organisation" designation on the Houthis. So far, the Houthis say the airstrikes have killed 57 people.

That's just over half the 106 people the Houthis' secretive leader, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, claimed the US and UK killed during all of 2024. He provided no breakdown of combatants versus noncombatants. Houthi fighters often aren't in uniform.

Al-Houthi said the two countries launched over 930 strikes last year. The USbased Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, known as ACLED, has recorded 305 strikes.

### The UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation report, released Tuesday, cited the example of five "exemplar countries" in achieving child mortality reduction India, Nepal, Senegal, Ghana and Burundi highlighting diverse strategies that have accelerated progress in reducing preventable child deaths. The report said these countries illustrate that with "political will, evidence-based strategies and sus-

reductions in mortality, bringing the world closer to an end to preventable child deaths". On India, the report said the country has made gains through health sys-

tained investments, even resource-con-

strained settings facing unique

challenges can achieve substantial

tem investment. 'Through strategic investments in its health system, India has already saved millions of young lives and paved the way to ensure healthy lives for millions

more," it said. The report highlighted that since 2000, India achieved an under-five mortality reduction of 70 per cent and a neonatal mortality reduction of 61 per cent, "driven by overlapping measures to increase health coverage, enhance available interventions and develop health infrastructure and human resources", the report said.

United Nations cited the example of Ayushman Bharat, the world's largest health insurance scheme which provides annual coverage of nearly \$ 5,500 per family per year.

# South Korea struggles to contain wildfires that have killed 26 people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Cheongsong

(South Korea)

elicopters dumped water over a burning forest in South Korea on Thursday as fire crews struggled to contain the country's worst-ever wildfires, which have killed 26 people, forced at least 37,000 others to flee their homes and destroyed more than 300 structures.

Multiple wildfires fuelled by strong winds and dry weather have been raging across South Korea's southeastern regions since last Friday. The South Korean government has

mobilised thousands of personnel, dozens of helicopters and other equipment to extinguish the blazes, but gusty winds are hampering their efforts.



inches) is forecast likely won't help much in extinguishing the wildfires. The fatalities include a pilot whose helicopter crashed during efforts to contain a fire Wednesday and four firefighters and

Rain was expected later Thursday. But

Korea Forest Service chief Lim Sang-seop

other workers who died earlier after being trapped by fast-moving flames. Authorities haven't disclosed details of

the civilian dead, except that they are mostly in their 60s or older who found it difficult to escape quickly or who even refused orders to evacuate. They suspect human error caused sev-

eral of the wildfires, including cases where

people started fires while clearing over-

grown grass from family tombs or with

said the amount less than 5 millimetres (0.2

sparks during welding work.

Lee Han-kyung, deputy head of the government's disaster response centre, told a meeting Thursday that the wildfires have again disclosed "the reality of climate crisis that we have yet experienced," according to Yonhap news agency. Calls to his centre were unanswered.

Scientists say the warming atmosphere around the world is driving ever more extreme weather events, including wildfires, flooding, droughts, hurricanes and heat waves that are killing people and causing billions of dollars in damage every year.

The wildfires have burned 36,010 hectares (88,980 acres) of land, the disaster response centre said Thursday. Observers say that's the worst figure of its kind in South Korea.

# WORLD 09

# **Kim observes tests of North** Korea's new reconnaissance

orth Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed tests of newly developed reconnaissance and attack drones this week and called for their increased production, state media said Thursday. Kim has been emphasising the development of drones and the tests were the latest display of his country's growing military capabilities.

Photos released by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency showed Kim observing what appeared to be a large reconnaissance drone roughly resembling Boeing's E-7 Wedgetail airborne warning and control aircraft.

Other images showed exploding drones crashing into military vehicles used as targets. The agency said the test demonstrated the reconnaissance drone's ability to track multiple targets and monitor troop movements on land and at sea, potentially enhancing North Korea's intelligence-gathering operations and ability

said the new exploding drones are designed for various attack missions and feature unspecified artificial intelligence

Kim expressed satisfaction with the drones' performance and approved plans to expand production, emphasising that drones and AI should be "top" priorities in efforts to advance his armed forces and adapt them to modern warfare,

Kim is also aligning with **Russian President over the war** in Ukraine, sending troops and military equipment to support **Russia's efforts** 

KCNA said. The agency said the tests took place as Kim visited a drone technology complex and an electronic warfare research group on Tuesday and Wednesday. South Korea's Defence Ministry didn't immediately comment on the North Korean report.

strations of drones that explode on impact in November and August last year.

North Korea also last year accused South Korea of sending its own drones to drop anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets over the North's capital of Pyongyang and threatened to respond with force if such flights occur again.

South Korea's military refused to confirm whether or not the North's claims were true. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have escalated recently as Kim continues to expand his military capabilities, which now includes various nuclearcapable weapons targeting South Korea and intercontinental ballistic missiles potentially capable of reaching the US mainland. Kim is also aligning with Russian President Vladimir Putin over the war in Ukraine, sending troops and military equipment to support Russia's efforts. This has raised concerns that he may receive Russian technology transfers in return, further strengthening the threat posed by his nuclear-armed military.

## Not all European allies agree on proposed force for Ukraine, says French President

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Paris

kraine's European allies did not all agree Thursday on the proposed deployment of troops in the country to back up an eventual peace deal and only some want to take part, French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday. "It is not unanimous," he said after wrapping up a summit on strengthening Kyiv's hand and its military as it pushes for a ceasefire with Moscow. "We do not need unanimity to achieve it." Macron said France and Britain, which are driving the initiative, would forge ahead with a "reassurance force" with several countries. The summit hosting the leaders of nearly 30 countries plus NATO and European Union chiefs comes at a crucial juncture in the more than threeyear war, with intensifying diplomatic efforts to broker ceasefires, driven by pressure from US President Donald Trump to end the fighting.

Before the leaders met in the luxury of the French presidential palace, Russian drone attacks overnight wounded more than 20 people and heavy shelling Thursday afternoon killed one person and knocked out electricity in parts of Kherson, Ukrainian officials said.

US-brokered agreements this week to safeguard shipping in the Black Sea and last week to halt long-range strikes on energy infrastructure were greeted as a first step toward peace. But Ukraine and Russia have disagreed over the details and accused each other of deal violations, foreshadowing a long and contentious process ahead. France and the United Kingdom are pushing a separate initiative to build a coalition of nations willing in one way or another to support the deployment of a European armed force in Ukraine, with the aim of securing any peace deal by dissuading Russia from attacking the country again. Some European countries are more comfortable with a potential deployment than others — not least because a big unknown is whether Trump would allow American forces and intelligence agencies to back up any European contingent with air and logistical support and other assistance. Building a force big enough to act as a credible deterrent — UK officials have talked about possibly 10,000 to 30,000

troops — would also be a considerable effort for nations that shrank their militaries after the Cold War but are now rearming. There would also be questions to resolve about who would command the force and how it might respond to a major violation by Russia of any peace agreement. The office of UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who's driving the European initiative together with Macron, said that military planners from Europe and beyond have been drilling down into details of how such a force might be put together, examining "the full range of European military capabilities including aircraft, tanks, troops, intelligence and logistics."

In the face of enduring pressure from Trump on European nations to increase military spending and rely less on US forces, dating back to his first presidency, the proposed contingent is also seen as a test of Europe's ability to defend itself and its interests. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy posted an image from inside the summit of him and other leaders standing together with the caption: "Europe knows how to defend itself. We must prove it."

## Bangladesh military's importance for regional security: US General

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Dhaka

⊣he United States has expressed its interest to equip the Bangladesh Army with its military hardware, taking into account its importance for regional security as US Army's deputy commanding general for Pacific made a 24-hour visit to Dhaka,

In a brief statement issued late on Tuesday, the US embassy said that during his visit, Lieutenant General Joel 'JB' Vowell met with his Bangladesh armed forces counterparts, reinforcing the US Army's commitment to a strong relationship with the Bangladesh

Army. It said they highlighted "shared security interests and ongoing collaboration" as part of which they discussed "potential acquisition of US-origin equipment to enhance

(BSS), meanwhile, said the US general acknowledged Bangladesh Army's ongoing support to domestic security, particularly in light of other demands such as disaster response. "During his visit, Lt Gen Vowell engaged in high-level discussions with senior officials of the Bangladesh armed forces, including Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman," BSS reported.

interoperability and capabilities". The state-run Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha

## 'Coalition of the willing' mulls more aid for Ukraine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Paris

kraine's allies from across Europe gathered for talks in Paris on Thursday about how to strengthen Kyiv's hand and its military as it pushes for a ceasefire with Russia, and to consider proposals to deploy European troops in the country in tandem with any peace deal.

French President Emmanuel Macron was hosting the leaders of nearly 30 countries plus NATO and European Union chiefs. The summit comes at a crucial juncture in the more than three-year war, with intensifying diplomatic efforts to broker ceasefires, driven by pressure from US President Donald Trump to end the fighting. But the conflict is raging on. Russian drone attacks overnight before the leaders met in the luxury of the French presidential palace injured more than 20 people, Ukrainian officials said.

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After talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to prepare for the summit, Macron said Wednesday that the proposed European force could deploy to "important towns, strategic bases" in Ukraine and that it could "respond" to a Russian attack if Moscow launched one.

Macron didn't specify what sort of response he envisaged. But he suggested that a Russian attack might not go unanswered, even though the European troops wouldn't be deployed to the frontlines. "If there was again a generalised aggression against Ukrainian soil, these armies would, in fact, be under attack and then it's our usual framework of engagement," Macron said. "Our soldiers, when they are engaged

Notice is given on benalf of my client Bank of Baroka. Ranch Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi who has disbursed a Housing Loan Facility of Rs. 3,50,00,000/- to Mr. Varun Goyal, Mr. Sahil Goyal, Mr. Sarshi Goyal, Mr. Krishan Goyal, Mrs. Sakshi Gupt and Mr. Sakshi Gupt and Mr. Sakshi Gupt and Mr. Sakshi Gupt and Mr. Facilities, my client has taken the mortgage of the below mentioned property as a security. Therefore, any person(s) having any claim in respect of the below referred property or part thereof by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, charge, gift, maintenance, inheritance, possession, lease, tenancy, subtenancy, lien, license, hypothecation, transfer of title or beneficial interest under any furser order or other disposition or under any furser order or Award or otherwise claiming, howsoever, are hereby requested to make the same known in writing logether with supporting documents to the undersigned at their office at 2,11, Lin E. period of 10 days (bot days inclusive) of the publication hereof failing which the claim of such person(s) will deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned.

waived and/or abandoned.

SCHEDULE

Freehold Prop Plot No. 25, Road W-9, Situated at residential Colony DLF Qutub Enclave Complex Phase-III, Village Nathpur, Tehsil Wazirabad District Gurugram Haryana-122002, admeasuring 336 sq. mtrs. belongs to Mr. Varun Goyal, Mr. Sahil Goyal, Mrs. Sakshi Gupta and Ms. Shagun Goyal. Boundary Description:
East: Property No. W-9/24, West: Property No. W-9/26, North: Road,
South: Property No. W-10/3.
Place: New Delhi

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and deployed, are there to react and respond to the decisions of the commander in chief and, if they are in a conflict situation, to respond to it.

So we are not on the frontlines, we don't go to fight, but we are there to guarantee a lasting peace. It's a pacifist approach," he said. "The only ones who would, at that moment, trigger a conflict, a bellicose situation, would be the Russians if they decided again to launch an aggression."

In the meantime, Ukraine's allies in Europe are working to strengthen Kyiv's hand militarily. Their aim is to enable it to keep fighting until any broad ceasefire takes hold and also to turn the Ukrainian army into the first line of defence against any future Russian aggression.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that our client intends to purchase land comprising khewat no. 32, khatoni no. 38, rect. No.17, killa no. 15(8-0) as per jamabandi for the year 2022-2023 situated within revenue estate of village Fazzupur, Majra Neemka, Distt. Faridabad from Sh. Narender Kumar @ Narender Kumar @ Narender Kumar wadav adopted son of Dalu Sio Madho, Rio village Mirzapur, Sub Tehsil Tigaon, Distt. Faridabad.

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Ram Kumar Gupta & Co.

PUBLIC NOTICE RUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Vikas Chhibber is in process to avail the working capital from HDFC Bank, in the name of Mjs Asiatic Agencies (Partnership firm) against his Shop bearing no. 1484, on Ground Floor, without roof/terrace rights area measuring 500 s.q.t., approx situated at old Court Compound Complex, Kashmere Gate, Delhi, Near Ritz Cinema Delhi-110066 having acquired ½ undivided of the said property by virtue Nelease deed dated 27/12/20214 (doc. No. 2025/19/1/ 1054) executed by Akashdeep Chhibber whereas Akash Deep Chhibber and Vikash Chhibber purchased the said property by virtue Sele Deed dated 13/8/2012 Doc no. 8168 from Deepak Praveen kalra.

Jude no. 81 68 from Deepak Praveen kalra. All personis having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, propersion large, subleage, tignage, license, license. possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howseover, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 07 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaluxim Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810963351



## CHANGE OF NAME

Sita Ram, Father of-No.16021721A Hav/Dresser Ranjeet Chauhan, R/o- VPO-Dighwaniya. Majhuawa, Azamgarh, U.P.- 276124, have changed my name from Sita Ram to Sitaram Chauhan, vide affidavit dated 27/03/2025 before Notary Public Delhi. PD(1754)C

I, Bhool Mati Devi, Mother of-No.16021721A Hav/Dresser Ranjeet Chauhan, R/o- VPO-Dighwaniya, Majhuawa, Azamgarh, U.P.- 276124, have changed my name from Bhool Mati Devi to Foolmati, vide affidavit dated 27/03/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1755)C

PD(1757)C

I, Appanna Babu, Father of No.15817662M Hav/Clk(IM) Appalaraju Mangipudi, R/o-Attada Vill, Jami Mandal, Vizianagaram Dist, A.P.-535214, have changed my name from Appanna Babu to Mangipudi Appannababu, vide affidavit 05/03/2025 before dated Notary Public Vizianagaram.

PD(1756)C I, Bhagwant Kaur, W/o-No.15576242L Hav Gurjeet Singh, R/o- Village- Nagla, PO-Handesra, Teh- Derabassi, Dist- SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab- 140501, declare that in husband's service documents my D.O.B. is wrongly written as 16/07/1988, whereas my correct D.O.B. is 13/03/1988, which may be amended accordingly.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

The general public is hereby informed that my clicnt, Smt. Kamlesh Sharma W/o Rajender Pal Sharma, R o C Nehru Road, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi - 110033, has severer all relations with her son Atul Sharma and his wife Sarabjeet Sharma due to thei nisbehaviour and misconduct and has lebarred/disowned them all movable and immovable pnoportics/assots. Anybody dealing with them will be doing it at his/her o \ n cost and risk. My client shall not be liable for any act or deeds of them in any manner

PARVEEN KUMAR (Advocate) J-1/105, Main Road JJ Colony Wazirpur, Delhi-110052, Mob.:-8802035883

PUBLIC NOTICE Be it known to all that I, ASHOK MEHTA S/O LATE SHREE CHAND MEHTA R/O- FLAT NO. K-11, TARA CGHS LTD., PLOT NO. D-3, TARA APPTS, ALAKNANDA, NEW DELH-19, I am the mutatee/legal owner of FLAT NO. K-11, TARA CGHS LTD., PLOT NO.D-3, TARA APPTS, ALAKNANDA, NEW DELH-19, which is allotted by the DDA. I have lost the Duplicate Share Certificate of the above Flat. FIR/NCR to this effect has lodged in P. S. Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No. 2708878/2025, Dated-27-O3-2025 Any person(s) Claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with ving any objection or found in possession of ginal documents,may write/contact with one amend person at above address/phone 9891154600 within 15 days from the date publication of this notice. Any persor iming any right, interest, or having any jections with respect to this property car o personally inform/contact me.

is hereby informed to public at large that ny client Smt. Sharda Devi w/o Late Sh R.S. upta resident of A-172 Shakarpur Delhi-110092 here by debar her Son Raiendra Prasad Gupta his wife Seema Gupta and their three children Aditya Gupta, Mansi Gupta and Manika Gupta from all her movable and immovable property, due to heir bad behaviour. She won't be sponsible for their any activity & liabilities. Naresh Kumar Sharma (Advocate) Ch. No.: E-404. 4th Floor. Karkardoom Court. Delhi-32, Mob.: 9910618418

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my clients Smt. Sheela Devi and her husband Mr. Man Singh, both residents of WZ-164-B, Madipur Village, West Delhi, Delhi-110063 have served all their relations with their son Mr. Gaurea and het daughter in law Kusum Rani due to their bad habits. Both of my above named clients have also disowned and debarred their said son & daughter in law from all their morable and improvable properties. Anybody dealing with Mr. Gaurav & Kusum Rani will do so at his/her/their own risk and responsibilities and my clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Mr.

Enrollment No- D/2803/2021

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Sen and Late Sh. Rabindra Nath Sen were the Joint owners of Flat No. 440, Sector-37, Aru Jihar, Noida Distt. G.B. Nagar (U.P.). The will c Late Brig. Reba Sen was executed on 20th January 2003 and was registered in the office of Sub- Registrar (III) Noida, in Register No. 3, Volume No. 85 Page No. 351/354 Serial No. 36. t is therefore informed by means of this notice that the above mentioned property, according to the will of Late Brig. Reba Sen, will be transferred in favour of her niece Suparna Sen (50%) resident of FlatNo. SDF-56C, Green view Apartments, Sector-15A, Noida, Distt. G.B Nagar (U.P.) and second niece Surabhi Supeka 50%) resident of 191-B A2B Ekta Apartmen irst Floor, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063. anyone has an objection, then he/she may not he same within 30days of this notice being published with sufficient evidence at Noida Authority's Group Housing Department.

(Smt. Suparna Sen) PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client - Rajeshwar Tyagi owne of the Property address:-Built-up Plot No. 4. Area meausiring 100 sq. yds.out of total area 200 sq. yds. out of khasra no. 30/20,21, Situated in the area of Village Hastsal and the colony known as Nagar Extn., in Block-B. Uttam Nagar, New Delhi This Documents Not Available

Photocopy of Survivor Certificate of Smt. Munni Devi W/o Sh. Rajeshwar Tyagi in favour of her legal heirs 1) Smt. Dimpal Tyagi D/o Sh. Rajeshwar Tyagi, 2) Smt. Anju Tyagi D/o Sh. Rajeshwar Tyagi & 3) Sh. Nitin Tyagi S/o Sh. Rajeshwar Tyagi 4) Sh. Rajeshwar Singh S/o Lt. Sh. Lakhpat Singh. it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

Basukee Nath Jha (Advocate)
Plot No 714, A/A, A Block Inder Enclave
Ph-2, Kirari Suleman Nagar, ND-86

## PUBLIC NOTICE AGGARWAL and SHALLU AGGARWAL w

Notice is hereby given on behalf of MANISH AGGARWAL and SHALLU AGGARWAL who intends to purchase Built up Property bearing 10x C-4/T, Block C-4, Plot No. 7, area measuring 229 Sq. Yds. (Southern Portion) situated in the layout plan of Krishan Nagar, in the area of village Ghondil Illaqa Shahdara Dehi-110051 from (1) RAJENDER KUMAR KHURANA (25% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (3) SATISH KUMAR (50% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (3) SATISH KUMAR (50% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (3) Deed bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (3) SATISH KUMAR (50% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED Deed bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (3) SATISH KUMAR (70% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (5) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (5) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (5) ED Ded bearing 10% UNDIVIDED SHARE) (4) ED DED DED DED DE BAICA (5) ED DED DE SHARE) (7) ED SHARE) odow, falling which it shall be presumed that t said property is free from all type Encumbrances, lienet. Lucem Legal LI Plot No.136, (Basement) Uday Pai

मेरे मुविक्कल राजेश कुमार मोर्च पुत्र श्री ज्वाला प्रसाद मोर्च निवासी 529 लक्ष्मी गार्डन अलापुर गाजियाबाद यूपी ने अपनी पुत्री नेहा ( 19 वर्ष ) को उसको गलत आचरण के चलते उससे अपने सभी तरह के संबंध विच्छेट कर लिये हैं व संपत्ति किये गये किसी भी कत्य के लिये मेरा मविक मयंक कुमार, अधिवक्ता

### MAGNETIC PARTICLE TESTING OF CBC KNUCKLE AT ROH SECTION

E-Tender No. : Mech-LMG-ET-18-2024-25, Dated: 24-03-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; Name of work : Magnetic Particle Testing (MPT) of CBC knuckle at ROH section of Wagon Maintenance Depot/New Guwahati for a period of 02 Advertised Value: ,691.20/-; Earnest years. ₹32,04,691.20/-; **Earnest Money**: ₹64,100/-; Date & time of closing of tender at 13:00 hrs. on 07-04-2025. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. DME, Lumding NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

## **NORTHERN RAILWAY**

**OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE** 

The Sr. Divisional Engineer/C, Northern Railway, DRM Office, Delhi Division, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055, for and or

S. No.			Earnest Money to be deposited		Date of Opening
	Reconditioning of Wheel Burns/scabs and Reconditioning of cupped welded joints over Delhi Division under DEN/Track/DLI	Rs. 77,59,500/-	Rs. 1,55,200/-	12 Months	22.04.2025

The e-tender is to be submit through railway website 'https://ireps.gov.in'. The tender can be submit on website up to 15:00 hrs. on 22.04.2025 and shall be opened there after

No.: 128-W/Sr.DEN-C/NIT-35-24-25-WC Date: 27.03.2025 954/2025 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, ( यांत्रिकी शाखा ), भोपाल

क्रमांक 81/याँ.वि./25 भोपाल, दिनांक 26.03.2025 निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

निम्न कार्य हेतु म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। विस्तृत विवरण website <u>https://www.mptenders.gov.in</u> पर है। क्र. निविदा क्र. कार्य का संक्षिप्त विवरण निविदा क्रय करने का अंतिम

ागत ( रू. में ) दिनांक 01 2025\_UAD CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT WORK OF GOVERNMENT 05:30 PM 2,51,46,843/-402947 2 HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL SEMRA WARD 38 ZONE 09P 02 2025\_UAD CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT WORK OF GOVERNMENT 2,49,85,105/-15-APR-2025 05:30 PM 402945 2 MIDDLE SCHOOL AT DWARKA NAGAR WARD 37 ZONE 09 नोट – संशोधन केवल वेबसाईट पर ही देखे जा सकेंगे, समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित नहीं होंगे।

**Executive Engineer** Municipal Corporation Bhopal **District Bhopal** 

**INVITATION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST** 

A fund ("Fund") in the healthcare sector, registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India as a Category I Alternative Investment Fund, invites expression of interest for acquisition of units of the Fund which are available on an "as is, where is" basis. This invitation for bids is for a minimum of 25% of the units of the Fund representing consolidated value of the unliquidated investments of the Fund's investment portfolio.

Interested parties can reach out at the contact details mentioned below, post which they will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement, followed by further information on the unlisted securities.

The last date for receiving bids from interested parties is 10 days from the date

We reserve the right to cancel this invitation and/or invite fresh applications with or without amendments to this invitation, without any liability, obligation for such invitation, and without assigning any reason. Contact details: contactus.bidsaif@gmail.com

### E-AUCTION FOR AWARDING PARKING STAND CONTRACT

E-auction for awarding parking stand contract at following locations over Katihar Division for a period of 03 (Three) years. **Description:** Parking Lot for Two Wheelers, Three Wheelers, Four Wheelers & Passenge Carrying Commercial Vehicles. Auction Catalogue No.: C-Parking-PRNA-; Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots): 11:00 hrs. or 08-04-2025; Auction Close Date & Time: 12:30 hrs. on 08-04-2025; Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee; Trips/Days: 1096.

Location

Lot No./Category

No.	Lot No./ Category	Location
AA/1	PARKING-KIR-BORA-MX-140-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)	Bagdogra
AA/2	PARKING-KIR-FBG-MX-139-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)	Forbeshganj
AA/3	PARKING-KIR-SM-MX-142-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)	Samsi
AA/4	PARKING-KIR-MLFC-MX-141-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)	Malda Court
AA/5	PARKING-KIR-PRNA-MX-143-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)	Purnea
AB/1	PARKING-KIR-NJP-PCCV-144-25-1 (Parking-Passenger Carrying Commercial Vehicles)	New Jalpaiguri
AB/2	PARKING-KIR-PRNA-PCCV-145-25-1 (Parking- Passenger Carrying Commercial Vehicles)	Purnea
Т	he press notification has already been uploar	ted in the IREPS

vebsite on 24-03-2025 through e-Auction portal www.ireps.gov.in Divisional Railway Manager (C), Katihai

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

28/03/2025 & onwards on website <a href="http://www.uktenders.gov.in">http://www.uktenders.gov.in</a>

## **Baba Farid University of Health Sciences** Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203 Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

### **E-TENDER NOTICE** E-tender are invited for the procurements of following items upto 25-04-2025

1) Providing & Fixing installation of online UPS 60 KVA for all ICU & Operation Theater at GGSMC&H.2) Construction of Additional Block for University College of Nursing FDK.3) Construction of road from Garrages to Nuclear Medicine Block, Supe Speciality Block, Critical Care Unit, University College of Nursing, Nurses Hostel to neet existing main Hostel Road (Ram bagh road ) in GGS Medical College & Hostel Faridkot. 4) Supply & laying of 400 sq.m(3-1/2 core) cable for new MTI installed Radio- Diagnosis Department at Super Speciality Block at GGS Medical Hospital FDK 5) Construction of Building to set up Medical Gases and laundary Plant at TCCC Fazilka 6) Providing & Installation of Copper pipes for Medical Gases Vacuum Compressed Air, Oxygen Manifold and LMO Tank 10KL for TCCC, Fazilka 7) Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of silent type DG Set 500 KVA 3 phase 415 volt, with AMF CPCB-iv & cabling for TCCC Fazilka under BFUHS, Faridkot.

ww.bfuhs.ac.in

00/12/403/2023/43006 Dated: 3/27/2025

कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, कोरबा ( छ.ग. ) **Notice Inviting** 

**Expression of Interest (EoI)** 

**Empanelment of Consulting Architectural /Engineer** /Landscaper /Interior Designer For Planning & Designing along With Engineering & PMC Services For Various Projects of Municipal Corporation Korba (C.G.).

On behalf of Municipal Corporation Korba, Chhattisgarh

the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation Korba invites Expression of Interest (EoI) from the consultant's firms having experience in the field of preparation of Detailed Project Reports of various infrastructure /development /Interior /Commercial /Landscaping /Serwage and other works etc, as per the terms and conditions of the EoI document.

The Last date of submission of proposal for EOI document is 15.04.2025 up to 16:00 Hrs. via speed post or registered post only, Opening of proposal will be done on 16.04.2025 at 17.30 Hrs. Detailed EOI Document can be Downloaded online from uad.cg.gov.in & korbamunicipal.in or from Municipal Corporation office.

अधीक्षण अभियंता नगर पालिक निगम कोरबा ( छ.ग. )



Seq

## Office of the Superintending Engineer 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora Phone/Fax: 05962-230295 Email: sepwdalm@rediffmail.com

Letter No.: 1362(i)/ Nivida-01/2024-25

Dated: 26/03/2025

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering) Short Term E-TENDER NOTICE The Superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, PWD Almora invites tender through E-Tendering (Two Bid System) on

SI. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Tender Form	Earnest Money (Rupee in lakh)	Validity of Tender	Time of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration for tendering
1	PD PWD Bageshwar Under the Road Safety work in accident prone spots Pauri Band-Devaldhar-Paldichina-Jhirali Motar Road (Main District Road) km. 1.00 to 9.00 and Garur-Devnai-kohina Motar road (Other District Road) in block Garur and km. 1.24 of access road (Other District Road) to N.E.S. Block Gaurd at district bageshwar.	₹ 5000.00 + 18% GST	₹ 11.26 Lakh	120 Days	04 Month (Including Rainy Season and Winter Season)	Class "A" & Higher in Road work in Central Govt./Any state Govt./Any Govt. Undertaking.

behalf of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from dated

# Trump's tariff likely to hit Indian auto component makers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

nited States (US) President Donald Trump's decision to slap a 25 per cent tariff on all auto imports has cast uncertainty over India's nearly \$seven billion of exports to America, which industry fears could squeeze margins.

Automobiles and car parts imported to the US would face a 25 per cent tariff starting April 2. While India is not a big exporter of cars to the US, Tata Motors' luxury car subsidiary Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is deeply entrenched in the American market. About 23 per cent of JLR's over 4,00,000 units sold in FY24 were in the US. These were all exported from its UK plants.

JLR's profitability is likely to be impacted as passing on added costs to consumers may dent its market share, analysts said.

The options before it are to pass the cost to consumers, cut expenses, or absorb the hit. A fourth option is to set up a US manufacturing facility to mitigate the damage. Indian auto ancillary firms will see the

biggest hit as they export a lot of components to the US. Sona BLW Precision Forgings, Bharat Forge, and Samvardhana Motherson International Limited (SAMIL) will be vulnerable to the tariff blow.

Sona BLW derives 43 per cent of its revenues from US exports, while Bharat Forge gets 38 per cent from sales to the US.

According to industry estimates, India's auto component exports to the US were \$6.79 billion in FY24, while the country's imports from the US stood at \$1.4 billion at 15 per cent duty. Prior to Wednesday's announcement by Trump, the US charged almost 'nil' duty on imported components.

"It is the Indian auto components industry that is more likely to face the heat due to the US tariff as exports from here to the US are significant. Indian vehicle makers are less likely to be impacted as there are no direct exports of fully built cars from India to the US," an industry executive said on the condition of anonymity.

Anuj Sethi, Senior Director, Crisil Ratings said the Trump Administration's move to impose a 25 per cent tariff on key automobile components, such as engines, transmissions, powertrain parts, and electrical parts from May 2025 or later, would compress the operating margins of Indian component manufacturer-exporters by 125-150 basis points from the current 12-12.5 per cent range, assuming full absorption of the tariffs.

About a fifth of the revenue of India's auto component sector is derived from exports. Of this, 27 per cent is to the US market alone.

The operating profitability of indirect suppliers who supply to Tier I suppliers or OEMs in other countries with end destinations in the US would also be impacted. However, select automotive component players, with US-based manufacturing facilities, may see some offsetting gains from better capacity utilisation.

Mrunmayee Jogalekar, Auto and FMCG Research Analyst, Asit C Mehta Investment Intermediates Ltd, said the US is not a significant export destination for India's vehicle exports.

"However, Tata Motors could face an impact due to its subsidiary, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), which derives over 30 per cent of its sales volume from the US market in 9M FY25. With no manufacturing facili-



ty in the US, all JLR vehicles will be subject to tariffs, which could impact pricing and profitability."

"For the Indian auto components industry, the US remains a key export market, contributing 27 per cent to total exports in FY24. Tariffs are expected on key components, such as the engine, transmission, powertrain, and electrical parts.

"This could have a greater impact on companies like Sona Comstar (43 per cent revenue from North America) and Samvardhana Motherson (18 per cent revenue contribution). However, most other component manufacturers have a welldiversified export presence, which could mitigate the overall impact," she said. Think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said the implications of the US announcement remain limited for India's auto industry and may even present

an opportunity for domestic exporters. "An analysis of India's auto and auto component exports in calendar year 2024 suggests that the impact of these tariffs on Indian exporters will be minimal," GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

In the case of passenger cars, the think tank said India exported a modest \$8.9 million worth of vehicles to the US in 2024, which is just 0.13 per cent of the country's total exports of \$6.98 billion.

He said this negligible exposure implies the tariffs will have no real effect on India's thriving car export business and in other categories too, the US exposure is either low or manageable.

Truck exports to the US stood at just \$12.5 million, representing 0.89 per cent of India's global truck exports and these figures confirm a limited vulnerability.

However, it said, some impact is likely in car chassis fitted with engines, where America accounted for \$28.2 million of India's \$246.9 million in global exports (11.4 per cent).

"The segment that warrants the most attention is auto parts. India exported \$2.2 billion worth of auto parts to the US in 2024, comprising 29.1 per cent of its global auto part exports. While this initially appears concerning, a closer look reveals a level-playing field," Srivastava noted.

The US imported \$89 billion worth of auto parts globally last year, with Mexico accounting for \$36 billion, China for \$10.1 billion, and India for just \$2.2 billion. Since 25 per cent tariffs apply across the board, all exporting countries face the same hurdle. In this context, he said, India's auto component industry may even find an opening.

JATO Dynamics India President and Director Ravi G Bhatia said India has not been singled out with Trump's tariff, which also applies to the country's competitors.

This step will hit for sure but it is not 'Tsunami'. It is not too much of a big hit and Indian suppliers will work out how to retain their market share in the US," he said, adding that as the situation is developing, it is too early to jump to a

conclusion. Bhatia expressed confidence that India's low-cost manufacturing will become even more advantageous as a 25 per cent increase in tariff will only push up vehicle prices in the US.

However, he said the latest move by Trump may make some of the Indian automakers - which were looking for global expansion, including the US market with new products including electric

vehicles — rethink their plans.

Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) and Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) did not comment on the development. Another industry executive said some of the leading auto component makers had set up plants in Mexico and Canada to leverage NAFTA and supply parts to the US.

Among them is the Motherson Group, one of the country's top auto component makers. Comments from the group could not be immediately obtained.

However, Samvardhana Motherson International Ltd Director Laksh Vaaman Sehgal had in the Q3 earnings call noted that Motherson has a globally local strategy with a manufacturing plant in close vicinity to its customers.

"All material flows like commodities are typically passed through and so they are customer nominated parts. Any change in tariff from these parts would have a passthrough effect."For the remaining procurement, we work actively to localise and hence the implications, if any, for Motherson will be very limited. Further, as tariffs are an industry-wide issue, these would ultimately be repriced by the cus-

## More taxes for Pakistanis after IMF deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Islamabad

¬he people of Pakistan should brace for more taxes as carbon levy is on the cards following a fresh deal of \$1.3 billion with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to tackle climate change, officials said.

Under the Staff-Level Agreement (SLA) with the fund on Wednesday, the lender also agreed to release the second tranche of about \$one billion under the already agreed \$seven billion loan.

The IMF team has reached a SLA with the Pakistani authorities on the first review of the 37 - month Extended Arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF), and on a new 28-month arrangement under the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) with total access over the 28 months of around \$1.3 billion," the Fund said in a statement.

With the latest RSF arrangement, the combined volume of IMF loan rises to about \$8.3 billion and approval by the IMF's Executive Board, the country would have immediate access to about \$two billion, which would help to shore up its balance of payment.

But the largesse by the lender comes with a price age for the already tax — burdened masses, as the government agreed to introduce a new carbon levy, increase water pricing, and open up the automobile sector to global trade, reported Dawn.

The only silver lining for the common people is the expected reduction in the power rate, but that is not free either, as the fund allowed the government to divert the already introduced petroleum levy to

reduce power tariffs. Senior officials privy to the SLA entailing the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) told the paper that about Rs seven per unit reduction in average electricity rates would be announced by the prime minister in a few days, but with effect from

Other major steps — carbon levy, water pricing and automobile protectionism would be gradual, with implementation starting from July 1, 2025. The overall fiscal consolidation will continue in the upcoming budget through a reduction in energy subsidies and tight development

The IMF appreciated the significant progress made by Pakistan over the past 18 months in restoring macroeconomic stability and rebuilding confidence despite a challenging global environment

spending. Officials said the government had requested a reduction in the GST rate on electricity to bring down costs. The IMF did not allow any more distortions in the GST system but allowed the use of a higher petroleum levy to compensate for power tariffs. ₹10 per litre increase in the petroleum levy was estimated to provide a roughly ₹1.80 per unit cushion. The combined impact of savings from all power purchase agreements and pending quarterly tariff adjustments would mean about ₹seven per unit reduction in the overall

rate, to be announced by the prime minister on a date of his choice.

Officials said the government has committed to introducing a carbon levy on all hydrocarbons, including petroleum products and coal, starting with ₹3 — 5 per litre or equivalent. This will gradually increase. The revenue will be spent on specific climate-related expenses.

Average trade tariffs (such as customs duties) for the automobile sector would also be reduced from about 10.5 per cent to six per cent from now on to FY 2030. Both the IMF and the authorities agreed that the auto sector had enjoyed too much protection for far too long, and this should end. The Cabinet approvals for these two measures would be shared with the IMF and then introduced through the finance bill 2025-26 for implementation with effect from July 1, 2025. Water pricing would also be approved in consultations with the provinces and be dealt with separately, sources said.

The IMF appreciated the significant progress made by Pakistan over the past 18 months in restoring macroeconomic stability and rebuilding confidence despite a challenging global environment.

While economic growth remains moderate, inflation has declined to its lowest level since 2015, financial conditions have improved, sovereign spreads have narrowed significantly, and external balances are stronger.

The authorities are on track to achieve an FY25 underlying primary surplus of at least one per cent of GDP and are committed to sustaining consolidation in the

# India repatriates 642 antiquities in 11 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

nion Minister of Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Thursday said in the Rajya Sabha that as many as 642 antiquities have been repatriated from different countries since 2014 under the Narendra Modi Government.

"India is negotiating for repatriation of antiquities with different countries like Singapore, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, etc," the Minister said during Question Hour.

He said there is a long process for repatriation of antiquities from different

"Since 2014, in the last 11 years of Narendra Modi Government, 642 important antiquities have been brought to the country," Shekhawat said and described this achievement as a moment of pride. He pointed out that only 13 antiquities

were repatriated between 1955 and 2014. The Minister said a detailed verification is being carried out for 297 antiquities brought from the US.

No claims have been filed so far from the States an museums.

The Minister said the Archaeological Survey of India has established a special gallery for the display of repatriated antiquities at Purana Qila, New Delhi.

Such antiquities are also loaned to institutions like the National Museum, Parliament of India, Indian Institute of Heritage, etc, for the research and education purposes and to sensitise

Apart from this, temporary exhibitions



Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the Budget session of

Gold rises ₹365 to reclaim ₹91,000 mark

repatriated antiquities.

'The Archaeological Survey of India is committed for protection of monuments, sites and antiquities under its jurisdiction. Besides regular watch and ward staff, Private Security Guards and Central Industrial Security Force are deployed as

"Whenever any theft of antiquity is

are also organised to display the reported, FIR is lodged in police station concerned and 'Look Out Notice' is issued to law enforcement agencies, including custom-exit channels, to keep vigil to trace stolen antiquity and prevent its illegal export," he said.

A Cultural Property Agreement has been signed with the US in 2024 to prevent smuggling of Indian antiquities, the minister added.

## **Rupee falls eight** paise against USD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

he rupee weakened by eight paise to close at at 85.77 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as month - end dollar demand from importers, coupled with the greenback's recovery against major currencies, weighed on the rupee.

The US dollar strengthened after US president Donald Trump late on Wednesday announced long — promised 25 per cent tariffs on automotive imports, set to take effect on April 2.

Forex dealers said the rupee is also facing renewed pressure on liquidity constraints, concerns over reciprocal tariff implementations and month — end demand for the US currency from importers. However, positive domestic markets and foreign fund inflows cushioned the downside.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.90 and touched the high of 85.73 against the greenback dur-

ing the day. The unit later turned volatile and hit the day's low of 85.93 before ending the session at 85.77 (provisional) against the dollar, eight paise lower from its previous closing level. On Wednesday, the rupee settled higher by three paise at 85.69 against the US dollar, Anui Choudhary, research analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan said, rupee is expected to trade with a slight negative bias on month — end dollar demand from importers and Oil Marketing Companies

"Elevated crude oil prices and a bounce back in the US dollar may also pressurise the rupee. However, strong domestic markets and FII inflows may support the rupee at lower levels. Traders may take cues from final GDP data from the US. USD — INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 85.60 to 86.10," Choudhary added.

## Sensex rebounds 318 points amid FII buying

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

enchmark BSE Sensex rebounded By nearly 318 points on Thursday on buying in blue — chip HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, L and T, and Bajaj Finance amid foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 317.93 points or 0.41 per cent to settle at 77,606.43 amid the monthly derivative contracts expiry day. During the day, it surged 458.96 points or 0.59 per cent to 77,747.46.

The NSE Nifty rallied 105.10 points or 0.45 per cent to 23,591.95.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, NTPC, Larsen and Toubro, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finance, Power Grid, Zomato, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and Titan were the biggest gainers.

Tata Motors tanked over 5.5 per cent after United States (US) President Donald Trump announced he would impose 25

per cent tariffs on imported cars. Sun Pharma, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharti Airtel, HCL Tech and Mahindra and Mahindra were also among the lag-

"Domestic indices maintained optimism throughout the day, driven by sustained foreign fund inflows and the purchase of blue-chip stocks. However, the 25 per cent tariff on auto imports imposed Trump has affected auto stocks and raised concerns within the pharma sec-

"Despite these challenges, the broader market demonstrated resilience, supported by expectations of double digit earnings growth in FY26, driven by easing inflation and a downward trend in interest rates, which are anticipated to improve domestic fundamentals," Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹2,240.55 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.90 per cent and midcap index climbed 0.46

Among BSE sectoral indices, utilities jumped 2.09 per cent, services (1.61 per cent), realty (1.38 per cent), oil and gas (1.32 per cent), energy (1.22 per cent) and power (1.16 per cent).

Auto and telecommunication were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Seoul and Tokyo ended lower. Equity markets in Europe were quoting lower. US markets ended in the negative territory on Wednesday.

The shift in FII stance, coupled with strength in banking and financial majors and rotational support from other heavyweights, is sustaining the positive sentiment. However, news related to US tariffs continues to trigger occasional volatility," Ajit Mishra — ŠVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.23 per cent to \$73.62 a barrel. The BSE benchmark gauge tanked 728.69 points or 0.93 per cent to settle at 77,288.50 on Wednesday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

old prices increased by ₹365 to ₹ 91,050 per 10 grams in the nation-Jal capital on Thursday amid a strong trend in the overseas markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent

purity had closed at ₹90,685 per 10 grams on Wednesday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also rose by ₹365 to ₹90,600 per 10 grams against the previous close of ₹90,235 per 10 grams.

"Gold maintains its gains as the global risk sentiment has been increased, following the new auto tariffs announced by the US President Donald Trump on Wednesday," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. Silver prices also went up by ₹200 to ₹1,01,700 per kg. It had ended at ₹1,01,500 per kg on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, gold futures for April delivery surged by ₹828 or 0.94 per cent to trade near a record high of ₹88,466 per

10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

On March 20, the yellow metal prices rose to hit a lifetime high of ₹89,796 per 10 grams. Spot gold in the international markets climbed by \$34.77 or 1.15 per cent to trade near a record high of

\$3,054.05 per ounce.

"Gold prices surged near \$3,050 per ounce as expectations of lower US GDP data and the anticipated reciprocal tariffs from the US on April 2, fuelled uncertainty," Jateen Trivedi, VP research analyst of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Meanwhile, gold futures for April delivery surged by ₹828 or 0.94 per cent to trade near a record high of ₹88,466 per 10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

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10 grams. Spot gold in the international markets climbed by \$ 34.77 or 1.15 per cent to trade near a record high of \$ 3,054.05

# Economic policies in India made for 'Bombay club', says RJD MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

¬ conomic policies in the country are not made for the people but for the "Bombay club," Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP A D Singh said in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday, adding that the situation was the same under the previous government led by the Congress as well.

Participating in a debate on the Finance Bill, Singh quoted a report of the World Bank from 2024 and said India's economic growth has slowed down, and at current pace, it may take 75 years to reach one quarter of per capita income of the US. He said it is the middle income trap,

where the top 20 per cent live in luxury, while the rest 80 per cent live in poverty.

"We are making policies without the Census data. Census data would have provided required data on health and education situations," he said. Singh said policies in the country are influenced by the "Bombay club". "And who makes the policies? Bombay club, major industries, IAS babus and friendly influencers in media determine the policy," Singh said. "This is true, the economic policy is not

to benefit you or me, it is to benefit the ombay club," he said. "Let me tell you it was the same during UPA time and it is the same during

And who makes the policies? Bombay club, major industries, IAS babus and friendly influencers in media determine the policy," Singh said. This is true, the economic policy is not to benefit you or me, it is to benefit the Bombay club - AD SINGH, RJD MP

their time. I am not saying UPA time was very good," he said, adding that "fact is fact". Singh also said that only a small section of the population has benefitted from the income tax cut announced in the FY26

budget, and urged the government to consider rationalising GST slabs.

Participating in the debate after Singh, Communist Party of India (Marxist) MP John Brittas took the jibe further, and said "My friend A D Singh was saying that financial policy of this country is being made by the Bombay club. I don't know if it is the Bombay club, Nagpur club, or Gujarat club, but this is heavily loaded

against Kerala and South India." He said South India has become a

"colony" of north India. "With the fiscal measures being adopted by the finance minister. I never expected the finance minister, being from Tamil

crimination," he said. He said there is a new dictum being followed in this country, which is "perform and perish". Amid the ongoing controversy around

Nadu, would be part of this game of dis-

a joke by stand-up comic Kunal Kamra, he said, "something happened in Mumbai, now one nation one finance ministry. Nationalist Congress Party MP Prafful

Patel, meanwhile, said under the Narendra Modi government, people are talking about the "aspirational India", and not just "garibi hatao", and "roti, kapda, makan".

He also said the United States imposition of tariffs would not impact India as we are a "net exporter" to the US.

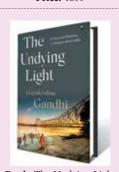


Book: All Our Loves

Author: Arundhati Ghosh Publisher: Aleph Book Company **Price:** ₹799



**Book:** Famous Last Questions Publisher: Aleph Book Company **Price:** ₹899



**Book:** The Undying Light Author: Gopalkrishna Gandhi Publisher: Aleph Book Company Price: ₹999



Book: The Scratch and Sniff Chronicles Author: Hemangini Dutt Majumder Publisher: Niyogi Books Price: ₹495

Poems that capture the emotions, doubts and hopes of a young mind

midnight haze

BY MALASHRI LAL

n engrossing and unusual bildungsroman, Kaia Roy's hook of poems Midnight Haze helps readers to embed themselves in the process of growing up in India today. The author, thirteen years old, demystifies several assumptions that adults hold about young people because they do not understand the rapid unfurling of technology, opportunity, selfhood, doubt and aspirations in the digital world that surrounds us. Kaia

Roy's poetry is an entry pass that opens the panorama to a two-way process of interaction between the new energy and the old

habits of thinking. Coming to particulars, a significant theme is the mirage of 'perfection, for she is young and accomplished and the demands of that image by self and society can be highly challenging. The poet senses her own transformations

and says in the preface that she has assembled in Midnight Haze a "collage of emotions I have been experiencing growing up and how it has affected me" (9). Introspective, adventurous — and most of all, deeply sensitive, she finds herself "walking on a tightrope" (60) while negotiating the bends on the road. On one hand "Im the kind of girl who dreams of distant shores" (25), she says, on the other hand are roadblocks of dark stretches and surrender to confusing

drawbacks. I admired the implications of Kaia's phrase "It's okay for me to fall and raise again" (9) and her candid declaration that one can be "young and deficient" (17). What we as adult readers teachers, parents, society leaders, would do well to understand is the young persons' dilemma that they are expected to "Keep chasing perfection like an endless game, Always feeling not enough, despite their

Extending this paradox of self-identification, I turn to another theme that the book exposes and that is "social media posts define our worth" as the poet says and uses a marvelous phrase "I'm fragile like a bomb" (53). I will not attempt to explain such a powerful metaphor but the digital pages explode before our imagination and we see glimpses of how masking the truth about one's identity or creating alternate realities have emerged as common prac-



tices. Whether the "reinvented myself" (90) is gameplaying or strategising is not the point-but Kaia in one poem touched me with her desire to assert her

cultural identity through language: *I am the dhol, The diya, The ran*goli, The lehenga (104-5) There's yet another theme that

exposes misconceptions that adults often hold about the myth of joyful growing up. Kaia is candid about the phantasmagoria, the dark clouds, the shadows that gather around the stumbling consciousness a young adult dealing with friendships, betrayals, jealousies, anger, hurt and doubt. She searches in the blue haze of midnight for a path that may lead her out." The sinner's soliloquy" (46), and "things she does at midnight" are

Book: Midnight Haze, Poems poems that boldly deal with Author: Kaia Roy violence, and the recurring Publisher: Authors Press image of the mirror in Kaia Price: ₹295/-Roy's poetry is a reminder of her multiple selves.

> rect storytelling as the precinct on which young lives are posted. "The princess in the tower", the one "who was lost to the night", is a fable that concludes with the wise couplet "In her silence, there's a lesson profound, / the loudest of all in the quietest may be found" (52). Similarly, the familiar ditty "Mirror, mirror on the wall" garners a philosophic query: "Am I always going to be the girl I used to be? Or is there a new reflection of me, waiting to be free?" (27)

In a sophisticated turn, the poet resorts to indi-

The young adult is the creator of our contemporary realities and is also created by an inherited cultural heritage. Kaia Roy's Midnight Haze unravels this territory with confidence and verve.

She is a writer and academic with twenty-four books to her credit and retired as a Professor from the English Department at the University of Delhi. She currently serves as the Convener of the English Advisory Board at the Sahitya Akaden

# Finding Self in Hidden Stanzas | The Power of Stories in Life and Beyonds

Fiction shapes our perceptions, influences real-world decisions, and impacts our understanding through its powerful narratives

BY DEEBA SALIM IRFAN

e often think of stories as a pleasant escape, a way to unwind after a long day. But the truth is, fiction does far more than simply entertain. It acts as a subtle yet powerful educator, a mirror reflecting our own lives, and a safe space to explore the complexities of the human experience. By immersing ourselves in fictional worlds, we gain insights far beyond the pages of a book or the screen of a film.

Perhaps the most significant gift of fiction is its ability to cultivate empathy. In R. K. Narayan's Malgudi Days, we observe the lives of ordinary people in a small Îndian town, understanding their daily struggles and joys. Similarly, in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird, we walk alongside Scout Finch, witnessing the world through the innocent eyes of a child confronted with racial injustice. As Harper Lee once said, "You can never understand a person until you consider things from his point of view, until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." Reading fiction helps us develop the ability to

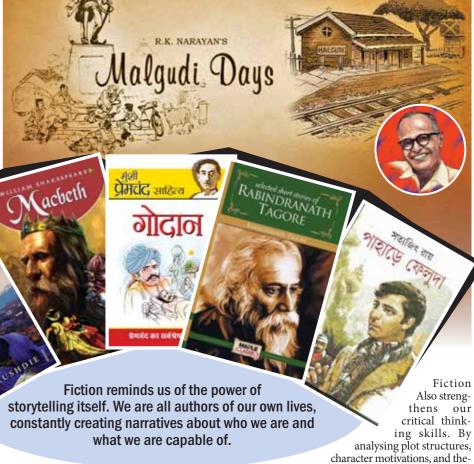
Stories also serve as a vital tool for understanding the consequences of our actions. By observing characters grapple with difficult choices, we witness the ripple effects of their decisions. In Shakespeare's Macbeth, we see how a single act

PRIDE AND

PREJUDICE

think from another's perspective.

of ambition can spiral into a tragic chain of events. We learn that even seemingly small actions can have profound and lasting impacts. Moreover, fiction provides a safe space for us to learn from the experiences of others. We can watch characters navigate challenging situations, overcome setbacks, and find solutions to seemingly insurmountable problems. In Premchand's Godan, we



name generates in the name of Indians. A ruth-

less, cruel hearted emperor who was bent on wip-

Dharma from his empire.

ing out even the last vestige of the Sanatana

Many Muslim soldiers have fought for India in wars against China and Pakistan. The name Abdul Hamid of the 4 Grenadiers is still etched in the hearts of those who follow military history. Hamid was awarded the Param Vir Chakra for his dedication to India during the 1965 war against Pakistan.

Similarly, The Brave, a book by Rachna Bisht

Rawat, recounts the stories of numerous soldiers decorated with the Param Vir Chakra

see how Hori Mahato struggles against poverty and social injustice while maintaining his dignity. Similarly, in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, Elizabeth Bennet learns to navigate social complexities and overcome her prejudices. This vic-

arious learning allows us to acquire practical skills, such as conflict resolution and problem-solving, without having to

endure the same trials ourselves. Rabindranath Tagore's stories, we witness the subtle expressions of love, longing, and grief. Similarly, in

Virginia Woolf's Mrs Dalloway, we explore the complex inner world of a woman navigating her past and present. This deepened awareness of emotions helps us recognise nonverbal cues, subtle shifts in

mood, and the diverse ways people experience and express their feelings.

matic elements, we learn to evaluate information, identify patterns, and draw logical conclusions. In Satyajit Ray's Feludastories, we follow a detective's logical deductions to solve mysteries. Similarly, in Agatha Christie's novels, we are challenged to unravel intricate plots and identify the culprit. This analytical mindset is invaluable in our daily lives, where we are constantly bombarded with information from various sources.

Furthermore, stories can inspire personal transformation. In J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, Frodo's courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming odds inspire us to persevere. We learn that we too possess the strength, determination, and resilience to overcome obstacles and achieve our goals. Fiction provides a blueprint for personal development, encouraging us to strive towards our aspirations.

By witnessing the impact of stories on characters and their worlds, we gain a deeper appreciation for the role of narratives in shaping

# RCB hopes to end 17-year Chennai jinx

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Chennai

oyal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) hopes of exorcising a 17year jinx hinge on their experienced batting unit finding its range when they face familiar foes Chennai Super Kings in their Indian Premier League match here on Friday.

The Royal Challengers have beaten the Super Kings only once at Chepauk — in the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2008. In the current RCB squad, only star batter Virat Kohli was part of that moment and now he will like to breach the CSK's fortress for a second time.

But that's easy to dream. As ever, the Chennai outfit is constructed to win their home matches on a pitch that offers considerable help to spinners.

They have the ever-familiar Ravindra Jadeja and have brought back 'old boy' Ravichandran Ashwin through last year's players' auction.

The Chennai side has also added Afghanistan left-arm wrist spinner Noor Ahmad too to the squad, and the troika did well against fellow five-time champions Mumbai Indians a few days back.

The triumvirate bowled 11 overs against Mumbai, conceding an appreciable 70 runs for five wickets.

The pitch is expected to retain its character for this match as well, and the RCB batters, led by Kohli, will have to lift their game several notches to outwit an expe-



rienced bowling unit.

Outwit is the key word here. The Royal Challengers' batting unit should be clever more than downright aggressive to score off CSK's three-pronged spin unit, and Kohli should lead that charge.

Negating spin has not always been a strong point of Kohli's batting but in the last two years or so he has showed massive improvement in that department.

Central to that change is his willingness to play more sweep/slog sweeps against spinners, and Kohli will have to bring all those expertise to the table on a blockbuster Friday evening.

But then Kohli alone won't able to tackle a competent bowling machine, and he will require full-hearted support from Phil Salt, skipper Rajat Patidar, Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma etc.

Looking at the Chepauk pitch, RCB might even consider bringing in Jacob Bethell, possibly for Tim David, who also provide a left-arm spin option.

They will also keep an eye on the fitness of pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who missed the first match against KKR due to a niggle, and if the veteran is fit then he will come in for Rasikh Salam.

On the other hand, the Super Kings will

be eager for their middle-order to find its groove as Shivam Dube, Deepak Hooda and Sam Curran faltered against MI in the last match. They should lend more support to Rachin Ravindra and captain Ruturaj Gaikwad, while hoping for another strong cameo from MS Dhoni if it comes to that

The CSK will also closely monitor the fitness of ace pacer Matheesha Pathirana, who missed the game against Mumbai.

Nathan Ellis may sit out if the Sri Lankan regains his fitness in time.

## **Teams**

Chennai Super Kings: Ruturaj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Matheesha Pathirana, Noor Ahmad, Ravichandran Ashwin, Devon Conway, Syed Khaleel Ahmed, Rachin Ravindra, Rahul Tripathi, Vijay Shankar, Sam Curran, Shaik Rashid, Anshul Kamboj, Mukesh Choudhary, Deepak Hooda, Gurjanpreet Singh, Nathan Ellis, Jamie Overton, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Ramakrishnan Ghosh, Shreyas Gopal, Vansh Bedi, Andre Siddarth.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Rajat Patidar (c), Virat Kohli, Yash Dayal, Josh Hazlewood, Phil Salt, Jitesh Sharma, Liam Livingstone, Rasikh Salam, Suyash Sharma, Krunal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Swapnil Singh, Tim David, Romario Shepherd, Nuwan Thushara, Manoj Bhandage, Jacob Bethel, Devdutt Padikkal Swastik Chhikara, Lungi Ngidi, Abhinandan Singh, Mohit Rathee.

## Cricket dream shattered, Nathwani excels in para TT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

ara table tennis player Rishit Nathawani always wanted to become a professional cricketer but a devastating sports injury during a casual kabaddi match in 2017 left him paralysed from the neck down.

But Nathwani didn't lose hope. He turned to para table tennis to continue his sports journey and won the gold medal in men's Class 5 event at the Khelo India Para Games 2025 here.
"I got hurt in my back," Nathwani

recalls. "There was internal bleeding, which caused my nerves to break and the spine moved a little. This caused paralysis from the neck down."

The prognosis was grim. Doctors were pessimistic about his recovery, suggesting that he might never leave his bed. But Nathwani and his family refused to accept this fate.

Spending two months in rigorous rehabilitation at the Kokilaben Hospital in Mumbai, Nathwani gradually regained movement in his upper body. His initial goal was to return to professional cricket, but as physiotherapy progressed, he realised his path would be different.

"After my injury, my first goal was to recover fully and get back to professional cricket," he said.

"I did two years of physiotherapy and

recovered a lot, but my legs had

Para table tennis entered Nathwani's life almost by chance. During a road trip with his mother, he encountered his first coach, Ashok Pal, who was teaching para table tennis in a small shop. Encouraged by Pal's belief in his potential, Nathwani began training.

"He told me that I could win the nationals if I played," recalled Nathwani. In 2021, at the age of 19, he won a silver medal in his first national tourna-

ment, setting the stage for future success. Nathwani's immediate goal is to improve his world ranking and then qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics.

But he understands the journey requires dedication, planning to participate in at least six international tournaments annually to maintain and improve his ranking. Behind Nathwani's success is unwavering family support, especially from his mother, Vidhi Nathwani.

"When Rishit got injured, the doctors told us that he should think about leaving sports, saying he wouldn't even get out of bed," she recalls.

Nathwani and his mother are also advocates of para sports awareness.

"Many para people don't know about sports they can play. When they watch these games on TV, they'll realise they can also participate and excel," Nathwani said.

## **Tyrone Mings** named on Euro **2028** board of directors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

ston Villa defender Tyrone Mings was named on Thursday on the board of directors for the European Championship in Britain and Ireland in 2028. The 32-year-old Mings is the only player among the three independent nonexecutive directors helping to organize the tournament.

Mings has played for Villa since 2019 and has made 18 appearances for England, for which he was part of the squad at the 2021 tournament.

He has missed large chunks of the past two seasons because of injuries and will be 35 when Euro 2028 takes place, likely meaning he won't be involved in the England squad then.

Confirmation of Mings' involvement came in the announcement of the company — officially named "UK & Ireland 2028 Limited" - tasked with delivering Euro 2028. English Football Association chair Debbie Hewitt will also chair the Euro 2028 board. A tournament anchored in England with modern stadiums generating huge matchday revenues was a safe choice for UEFA eyeing its bottom line after the highmaintenance, low-revenue Euro 2021 that was staged during the pandemic in halfempty venues across 11 countries.

ŪEFA cash reserves after the pandemic dropped to 360 million euros in its most recent financial report, and Euro 2028 is set to lift the number back above UEFA's target of 500 million euros.

The men's Euros, held every four years, is the foundation of UEFA's finances and funds development payments to its members. Everton's new waterfront stadium at Bramley-Moore Dock is set to open for the start of next season, replacing the club's long-time home of Goodison Park, and was included in the list of venues hosting Euro 2028 matches announced in April 2023. Bramley-Moore Dock is currently staging test events.

## Alexandra Eala stuns Swiatek

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Miami Gardens

deenager Alexandra Eala pulled off another upset at the Miami Open when she knocked off five-time Grand Slam champion and secondseeded Iga Swiatek 6-2, 7-5 in the quarterfinals. The 19-year-old left-hander, who received a wild card into the WTA 1000 event, is the only player representing the Philippines on the women's pro-fessional tour and entered the tournament ranked 140th.

I do not have a lot of experience on the WTA Tour, that's for sure, but I do have experience with compartmentalising

- ALEXANDRA EALA, PLAYER

During her history-making run, Eala reached her first WTA semifinals by beating her third major champion, this time in 1 hour, 37 minutes.

"I'm in complete disbelief right now, I'm on cloud nine," Eala said in her oncourt interview.

Along the way, she defeated 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko and reigning Australian Open champion Madison Keys, who is ranked Number 5. That was Eala's first win over a top-10 player.

She hadn't even beaten a top-40 player until Miami. After Swiatek hit long on match point, Eala seemed teary-eyed as she looked up.

"I really tried to soak it all in, because

this has never happened to me before, and that's why I was looking at the screen, Eala said. "I really wanted to keep that moment in my mind. In the fourth round, Eala won on a

walkover over injured Paula Badosa, giving her added rest. Though Eala represents the Philippines, she has lived the last six years in Mallorca, training at the Rafael Nadal Tennis Academy. "I would love to think that I make a dif-

ference,' Eala said. "That's the only thing I can do to give back to my country is to help inspire, to inspire change and positive change, to inspire people to pick up a racket, to watch more tennis, watch more women's tennis.

Swiatek broke Eala in the first game, but the teenager broke right back. The first two games took 15 minutes to play and she never lost her poise.

"I don't have a lot of experience on the WTA Tour, that's for sure, but I do have experience with compartmentalising,

## Wrestler Dmitry Baboryko banned for two years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lausanne

ussian wrestler Dmitry Baboryko was banned for two years on Thursday after taking a breast cancer drug that counters the effects of using steroids. Baboryko tested positive for tamoxifen at the under-23 world championships last October in Albania, the International Testing Agency said on announcing the ban on behalf of the

United World Wrestling governing body. He accepted the two-year sanction including being disqualified and stripped of the silver medal from the heavyweight 130-kilogram class in Greco-Roman wrestling, the ITA said.

Russian wrestlers can compete in UWW events as approved neutral athletes who have not directly taken part in or publicly supported the war against Ukraine. None competed at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Wrestlers representing the "Authorized Neutral Athletes" team won the most medals at the under-23 worlds in Albania, though it is formally excluded from the medal table led by Iran.

# I'm used to bowling with someone who is better than me, says Moeen Ali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA 
Guwahati

candid Moeen Ali, who temporarily but successfully filled the void of Sunil Narine during Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL match against Rajasthan Royals, says he is "used to bowling with someone who is better than me."

Part of a KKR attack that also has Varun Chakaravarthy in its ranks, Moeen worked well in tandem with the Indian mystery spinner and choked RR in the middle overs to restrict them to 151 for nine in their contest here on Wednesday.

"My job was to keep it tight, so that he can build the pressure and maybe get wickets. I'm used to bowling with someone who is better than me and has more mystery than me. My job is to bowl as tight as I can and hopefully that builds pressure for that person to then get wickets," Moeen said at the post-match press conference.

"Varun is bowling outstandingly well as we know and he is a brilliant bowler. He has improved so much over the last two-three years. It is amazing to bowl with somebody like that," he added.

While the 37-year-old Moeen rose to

the challenge to return impressive figures of 2/23 from four overs, his younger spin colleague Chakaravarthy finished with 2/23 in his full quota of four overs. RR enjoyed a fruitful Power Play,

scoring 54 runs in the first six overs but the introduction of spin changed the complexion of their innings.

Moeen dismissed Yashasvi Jasiwal in his second over but his best moment of the game came when he sent back Nitish Rana with a classic off-spinner that turned away sharply from the left-hand-

ed batter to hit the middle stump. "That ball was a nice one. I was just trying to spin it as much as I could. I knew that there was a bit of pressure being built and I just tried to bowl in a good area, spin it as much as I could.

"I don't have the skill as other bowlers but my job is to contain as much as I can, not get hit for six over my head. If they

play good shots and hit me for fours and sixes, then I'm pleased with that. My skill is that I think like a batter, so I think what they think and it works in my favour." Narine was unavailable for the match

in Guwahati due to illness, forcing KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane to turn to the former England international hours before T20 is an unforgiving format and

Moeen admitted that bowlers need to evolve to keep challenging the batters. "India is a great place to bat. But on

wickets like this, you aren't going to get 300, you probably aren't even going to get 200. It's great to have these games in between those (high scoring) games. "Big scoring games are great to see but

it also gives a false sense of security, which is a bit too much. The game is developing fast and people are just fearless at the moment. The bowlers do have to come up with something, it is more important than ever before," Moeen said.

Hasaranga And Theekshana are world class: Bahutule Like the KKR tweakers, the RR spin-

ners Maheesh Theekshana and Wanindu Hasaranga could not live up to the expectations on a track which helped the

"We have spinners in Hasaranga and Theekshana who are obviously worldclass international players. At times I thought they were short (today) whereas if they had just owned the lengths a bit longer, there was definitely a lot of purchase for the spinners, KKs spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule said. Theekshana went wicket-less and con-

ceded 32 runs in fours overs, while Hasaranga gave away 34 runs in three overs while taking the wicket of Rahane.

"But again I just feel that they just got into the IPL championship, so now I am sure that in the coming games they will have an impact.

"I just trust all the spinners, all the bowlers in the team. I just want to say that it's again a young side, a very promising side batting wise, bowling wise. They are looking forward to every game and I am sure they will come good in the coming matches," Bahutule said.

# Jessica Pegula moves into third Miami Open semifinal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Miami Gardens

essica Pegula stopped the string of upsets at the Miami Open by ending the stalwart run of Britain's unseeded Emma Raducanu.

The fourth-seeded Pegula won 6-4, 6-7 (3), 6-2 in a two hour, 25 minute battle, to move into her third Miami Open women's semifinal in four years. Pegula, the last American in the field, faces the teenage wild card from the Philippines,

Alexandra Eala, on Thursday. Pegula's match ended at 11:23 pm. And forced the postponement of the men's quarterfinal between Novak Djokovic and Sebastian Korda until Thursday.

Raducanu, who won the 2021 US Open, came in ranked 60th world after experiencing multiple coaching changes

Pegula won the first set. But Raducanu flashed her power in taking the second set, though not before she appeared to struggle physically with Miami's high humidi-

ty that reached 70 per cent. Grimacing through points and showing signs of overheating, Raducanu posted five set points on Pegula's serve but couldn't convert. Pegula then held to close to 5-4. At that juncture, medical personnel took



Raducanu's blood pressure and pulse rate as the chair umpire declared a medical timeout. The medical officials rubbed ice bags on Raducanu's legs and put cold towels around her neck.

Raducanu sprang to life and dominat-

ed the tiebreaker 7-3. In the third set, Pegula rallied, going up an early break at 2-0. On her third break point, Pegula put away Raducanu's short ball and ended the match by breaking Raducanu at love.

In a nearly three-hour, men's quarterfi-

nal, a cramping, 14th-seeded Grigor Dimitrov barely survived the oppressive humidity to outlast No. 23 seed Francisco Cerundolo 6-7 (6), 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Dimitrov was led off the court by a tournament doctor and ATP physio after sitting in his chair for over 25 minutes, saying he was feeling "dizzy."

Dimitrov, a Miami Open finalist in 2024, saved a match point in the third set when trailing 5-6 before forcing a tiebreaker. He squandered seven set points in the opening set and lost the tiebreaker 6-4.

He will face the Djokovic-Korda winner in the quarterfinals.

The high seeds were falling earlier on Wednesday. Soon after unseeded wild card Eala stunned Number 2 seed Iga Swiatek in a straight-set women's quarterfinal, men's top seed Alexander Zverev got bounced by Number 17 seed Arthur Fils of France, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a fourth-round

men's match postponed by rain. Fils, who beat American Frances Tiafoe in his previous match in a marathon three setter, will face Jakub Mensik in Thursday's

In the third set, Fils broke Zverev at 3-3 and kept the German moving. On match point, Fils pounded a ball down the left sideline that the top seed couldn't

Fils, 20, received treatment on his back after the first set but rallied to win the next two, winning in two hours.

"I was feeling not great in the rallies," he said. "I've had a little problem in my back since I was young, so sometimes it hurts me a little bit. I had to find a rhythm, more aggressive and come into the court to play my game and not let him play.

Because when you let him play, he is one of the best tennis players in the world. I'm really happy about the way I did it."

## Iga Swiatek given extra security protection

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ga Swiatek was given extra security protection at the Miami Open after being verbally attacked during a practice session by a man who had sent the five-time Grand Slam champion harass-

ing messages via social media. We monitor the network to catch these types of issues. Constructive criticism is one thing, and threats, hate speech or even disturbance during training is another this cannot be condoned," a statement

from Swiatek's team said Wednesday. "We reported the matter to the tournament organizer, as well as to the WTA .. Which reacted immediately and took additional precautions, such as additional security, for which we are very grateful." The episode — first reported by BBC Sport — comes a little more than a month after a stalker was removed from a match being played by 2021 US Open champi-

on Emma Raducanu in Dubai. "Ensuring the safety of the players is crucial — they are the ones at the center of the event — and it is our job to protect them," the statement from Swiatek's team said. The Number 2-seeded Swiatek lost to wild card Alexandra Eala in the quarterfinals Wednesday. Asked afterward whether the security situation disrupted her match preparation, Swiatek replied: "No, I wouldn't say so."

"Player safety is our top priority. The WTA works closely with tournaments and their security teams on best practices for international sporting events to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

"There are comprehensive security protocols in place to make sure that any incidents are handled promptly and effectively," the WTA said.

"The details of these are not something we discuss publicly, but we are steadfast in our commitment to maintaining a safe environment for players and everyone attending one of our events." The Miami Open issued a statement saying: "We take the safety and security of all players and tournament attendees extremely seriously. We constantly evaluate any potential threats and take every measure to respond appropriately. To ensure the effectiveness of these efforts, we do not disclose the details of our security operations.'

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