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HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY

US SUPREME COURT PAVES WAY FOR EXTRADITION OF 26/11 ATTACKS MASTERMIND RANA

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major development, the US Supreme Court has paved the way for Pakistani-Canadian national and 26/11 attacks case accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana's extradition to India where he will face trial in the Mumbai terror strikes case. The US apex court early this week dismissed Rana's review petition (writ of 'certiorari') filed on November 13, 2024 challenging his extradition to India. With the rejection of his petition, Rana has exhausted all his legal options to evade his extradition to India. Now, Rana's extradition to India has become imminent. In the past, Rana had lost similar pleas, both in US Court of

Appeals in San Francisco and several federal courts, to be sent to India for prosecution of charges in the November 26-29, 2008 attacks case, in which 166 people were killed and 300 others injured. During the hearing in his latest plea in December 2024, the US Solicitor General Elizabeth B. Prelogar had made a strong case for rejection of Rana's review petition on the ground that the Lashkar-E-Taiba (LeT) operative was not entitled for relief from extradition to India. A former medical officer in the Pakistani army, Rana had migrated to Canada in 1990 where he became a citizen before moving to Chicago. As per US law, if he is not extradited to India, he will be deport-

ed to his home country Canada after the completion of his prison term in 2027. Rana is currently lodged in a Los Angeles prison for his involvement in plotting a terror attack on the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. Rana had contended that he was tried and acquitted by a federal court in Illinois (Chicago) on the charges pertaining to the 26/11 case, for which India sought his extradition. However, Prelogar had strongly opposed Rana's plea. Rana is accused of significant involvement in the 26/11 attacks case. Ajmal Kasab was among the ten Pakistani terrorists who had carried out brazen attacks on Mumbai. While nine of the ten

terrorists were killed by the security forces during the attack, the remaining one-Mohammed Ajmal Kasab - was caught alive by the police at Girgaum Chowpatty on the intervening night of November 26-27, 2008. After his conviction in the case, Kasab was hanged to death in the 26/11 attacks case in Pune's Yerwada central prison on November 21, 2012. Rana is one of the two masterminds who are yet to be brought to justice, while the other is Sayed Zabiuddin Ansari alias Abu Jundal, an Indian operative who worked for the Lashkar terror group. He was arrested in 2012 after being identified by Kasab and is currently behind the bars in Mumbai.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto prior to their meeting at the Hyderabad House, in New Delhi

India-Indonesia sets new pace to bilateral ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Indonesia on Saturday agreed to give a new momentum to the overall bilateral ties and especially concurred on working jointly in the areas of defence manufacturing and supply chains, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto for wide-ranging talks. Subianto, on a three-day visit to India, will be the chief guest at the Republic-Day celebrations at Kartavya Path on Sunday. In his media statement following the talks, Modi described Indonesia as an "important partner" of India in the 10-nation ASEAN bloc as well as in the Indo-Pacific, noting that both countries are committed to a rules-based order in the region. "We agree that the freedom of navigation should be ensured in line with international law," Modi said amid growing global concerns over China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific region. "We held extensive discussions on various aspects of our bilateral ties," the prime minister said, adding that India and Indonesia have agreed to work jointly on defence manufacturing and supply chains.

BALANCE OF ART, SCIENCE, LITERATURE, REGION IN LIST

Government announce Padma Awards

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday conferred with civilian awards including Padma Vibhushan awarded to former Chief Justice of India JS Khehar, noted doctor DN Reddy and Kathak danseuse Kumidini Lakhia and violinist L. Subramaniam. Padma Vibhushan was also posthumously awarded to Osamu Suzuki, noted writer MT Vasudevan Nair and folk singer Sharda Sinha. As many as 19 persons were awarded Padma Bhushan including noted journalist A Surya Prakash who served as Chairman of Prasar Bharti



(L-R): Justice Khehar, Sharda Sinha, A Surya Prakash and Sadhvi Ritambhara

and had a stint with 'The Pioneer' as consulting editor and columnist as well as founder Director of Pioneer Media School. Noted economist Bibek Debroy, former Lok Sabha Speaker Manohar Joshi, former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi and noted singer Pankaj Uthas were also conferred the prestigious Padma Bhushan. Sadhvi Ritambhara, the firebrand leader of the Ayodhya Ram Temple movement, Hockey goal keeper PR Sreejesh, film director Shekhar Kapoor and veteran journalist Rambahadur Rai, actress Shobana were also given Padma Bhushan.

Utkarsh Odisha Conclave 7,500 delegates from India, 16 countries to join

Top industry leaders to attend the event

NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR

As Odisha prepares for its two-day grand investment meet 'Utkarsh Odisha: Make in Odisha Conclave 2025' on January 28 and 29, the number of countries expressing interest in joining the event and signing pacts with the State Government continues to rise. According to State Minister for Industries and Skill Development Sampad Chandra Swain, by Saturday, 16 countries had confirmed their participation with the number likely to grow further. "We have already received proposals from 16 countries. Their envoys, business delegations and top industrialists will participate in the event. More than 7,500 delegates from both India and abroad are expected to attend the programme," Swain said told a press conference.



He also informed that some leading figures in Indian industry, including LN Mittal of ArcelorMittal Group, Kumar Mangalam Birla of Aditya Birla Group, Anil Agarwal of Vedanta Group, Sajjan Jindal of JSW, Naveen Jindal of Jindal Steel and Power, Karan Adani of Adani Group, and TV Narendran of Tata Group, would attend the conclave to be held at the Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the conclave on January 28. The event is expected to welcome over 100 representatives from 16 countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Vietnam, Italy, Belarus and the United Kingdom. Altogether, an estimated 7,500 industrial delegates are expected to attend the convention.

Forecasts about the Utkarsh Odisha event suggest potential investments totalling Rs 5 lakh crore. Minister Swain also informed that the State Government has already approved 159 industrial proposals with an investment of Rs 2.75 lakh crore within its first seven months. These projects are expected to create 2.15 lakh jobs.

Holiday Notice

The Pioneer wishes its readers a Happy Republic Day. January 26, the Republic Day, being a holiday in the offices of The Pioneer, Bhubaneswar, the next edition of the paper will appear on January 28, 2025.

Mahanga double murder Blow to Pratap Jena as SC asks State to respond in 4 weeks

NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Mahanga double murder case, which has involved Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader and former MLA Pratap Jena, has taken a significant turn with the Supreme Court directing the Odisha Government to submit a formal response within four weeks. This order, issued earlier this week, follows a petition filed by Ranjit Baral, son of Kulamani Baral, one of the victims in this high-profile case. Ranjit Baral approached the apex court seeking justice for the brutal killings of his father Kulamani Baral and his associate Dibyasingha Baral. The petition raised concerns



about the investigation process by the State's Crime Branch and called for a transparent judicial review. As the case continues to attract significant public attention, the Supreme Court stressed the urgency of a comprehensive response from the State administration to address the public and familial demands for justice.

The Mahanga double murder case has become a flashpoint for political tensions, especially with Pratap Jena's involvement. Kulamani Baral, a prominent BJP leader and block Chairman of Mahanga, was killed along with his associate Dibyasingha Baral on January 2, 2021. The two men were brutally attacked by unidentified assailants while travelling on a motorbike near Jankoti village in Mahanga block, Cuttack. The Baral family has long maintained that the murders were carried out on the orders of Pratap Jena, a claim that has added considerable political weight to the case.

In 2022, the High Court of Orissa cleared Pratap Jena of involvement in the case, ruling in his favour after he challenged a lower court's decision to take cognisance of the offenses against him. The decision was controversial with many critics arguing that the investigation had not been thorough. Further complicating the investigation, Prafulla Biswal, the prime accused in the case, was found dead under mysterious circumstances. This has only intensified the intrigue surrounding the case, prompting questions about the possibility of political interference or external pressure influencing the investigation.

DADLS-92

ସବିତ୍ର ସାଧାରଣତନ୍ତ୍ର ଦିବସ ୨୦୨୫
ଅବସରରେ
ମାନ୍ୟବର ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ପବିତ୍ର ସାଧାରଣତନ୍ତ୍ର ଦିବସ-୨୦୨୫ ପାଳନ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଓ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଉଛି ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଦେଶର ଏକ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ, ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ଏବଂ ବିକଶିତ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ପରିଣତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଏହି ପବିତ୍ର ଅବସରରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଶପଥ ନେବାକୁ ମୁଁ ଆହ୍ୱାନ ଜଣାଉଛି ।

Anup Singh
(ଡ. ହରି ବାବୁ କନ୍ୟାପାଟି)

OIPR-15001/13/0390/2425

DADLS-92

ସବିତ୍ର ସାଧାରଣତନ୍ତ୍ର ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଜଣାଉଛି । ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଏକ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଶା, ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଠନ ସହିତ ଦେଶର ଏକତା ଓ ଅଖଣ୍ଡତା ବଜାୟ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ସଜ୍ଜିତ ହୋଇ କାମ କରିବା ।

Sampad Chandra Swain
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

OIPR-15001/13/0392/2425

Pandian still active in Naveen Niwas

Hints BJD leader Manmath Routray

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Amidst the speculation surrounding VK Pandian's absence from public view after the BJD's 2024 election debacle, party leader Manmath Routray on Saturday gave an indirect hint that he is still active in the Naveen Niwas, the official residence of party president Naveen Patnaik.



According to Routray, Pandian is assiduously over-

seeing the health of Naveen Patnaik. He frequently used to engage with medical professionals who visited from other regions to advise on the former Chief Minister's health matters.

"VK Pandian is not in ac-

'Love' affair Girl attempts suicide jumping from college building

PNS ■ NAYAGARH

Plus II girl student of Nayagarh's Prajamandal Mahila Mahavidyalaya attempted suicide by jumping from the third floor of her hostel building. Fortunately, she survived but suffered serious injuries and is battling for her life.

The incident came to light when the college authorities informed the local police of the

matter on Saturday.

According to sources, it was a normal day at the college when the girl allegedly went to the third floor of the building and jumped from there. Fellow students and faculty members who were present at the spot immediately rescued her and rushed her to the Nayagarh District HQ Hospital.

Meanwhile, the college authorities informed the girl's family about the incident. Fol-

lowing this, the girl's family rushed to the hospital.

The Nayagarh Town police reached the incident site upon receiving information and have launched an investigation. However, no concrete reason has been established so far as to why did she take the drastic action. However, it is suspected that the girl might have tried to kill herself due to matters related to a love relationship.

DAV, HAL sign pact to strengthen township school



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) signed an MoU with DAV College Trust and Management Society, New Delhi in a formal ceremony on January 25 with a strong commitment for career development initiatives of the students of DAV VS Vidyalaya, HAL Township at Sunabeda.

students community.

The partnership will focus to equip the students with skill set and enhance the academic benchmark of the institution.

Executive Director, HAL, Koraput Sudhanshu Mohan Jena and Regional Director, DAV Institutions, Odisha Dr KC Satapathy exchanged the MOU between HAL Koraput and DAV in presence of General Manager HAL Kallol Bhattacharya and AGM Saroj Kumar Panda.

On the historic occasion, DAV has also facilitated an enriching counselling-cum-interactive session which was delivered by Principal DAV Public School, Kalinganagar, Bhubaneswar Balaram Mahapatra and Principal, DAV SCB Medical Public School, Cuttack Niranjana Swain.

In Bhubaneswar Scolded by dad for not going to school, boy hangs self

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a shocking incident, a minor boy reportedly hanged himself to death after being scolded by his father for not going to school in the Dhauli area on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar. The matter came to the fore after his hanging body was found near Panchabati Ashram on Saturday.

Dhauhi had not gone to school. This infuriated his father who reprimanded him. After being scolded by his father, the boy left the house. Later, his body was found hanging near the village. It was not immediately known why his family members performed the last rites without informing police.

The situation has intensified as officials seek the whereabouts of the child's father, who has reportedly gone missing after the incident. The circumstances surrounding his disappearance are yet to be understood.

Shockingly, the family members of the deceased minor performed his last rites without informing police.

According to sources, the boy from Kandi Sahi in

'Stop mining in Gandhamardan hills'

Forums urge govt NIMAIN CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

Thousands of people gathered in Sambalpur for a public meeting organised by the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM) and various local organisations. The gathering aimed to raise demands for the protection of natural resources, livelihood, and tribal rights.



A memorandum listing these demands was submitted to the Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi through the northern RDC.

Key demands included halting mining activities in Gandhamardan Hills, cancelling unauthorised mining leases given without Gram Sabha consent, and stopping displacement and destruction in the name of development.

The protesters also demanded proper implementation of the Forest Rights Act (2006), distribution of land to

landless families, and justice for families displaced by projects like Lower Suktel.

Speakers at the event criticised projects like Hirakud Dam, Rourkela Steel Plant, and coal mining for displacing thousands of locals without fair compensation. They also alleged that the government is now planning to lease Gandhamardan to private companies like Adani, ignoring earlier protests that had stopped mining in the region.

The gathering highlighted issues like environmental destruction, rising temperatures, and climate change due to unregulated industrialisation and mining. Protesters called for the constitutional rights of tribals and forest-dwelling communities to be upheld, particularly those enshrined in laws like PESA and the Forest Rights Act.

Local leaders such as Prafulla Samantra, Lingaraj Azad, and Saroj Mahanti urged people to unite and

strengthen the movement for their democratic and constitutional rights. Over a thousand tribals, Dalits, women, and activists participated in the event, representing groups like Lok Mukti Sangathan, Gandhamardan Suraksha Parishad, and many others.

The peaceful protest demanded immediate action to protect the environment, ensure fair resettlement of displaced families, and recognise farmers' rights over their produce.

IPS officer Pandit's suspension extended again

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The suspension tenure of Rajesh Pandit, the contentious Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has been extended by a further 60 days. This decision was taken by the Home Department. Pandit's prior 120-day suspension period concluded on Saturday.



resulting in an initial 60-day suspension. Subsequently, his suspension was extended from September 28 for another 120 days by the government, making this the third extension.

As per the allegations, on July 27, Pandit forcibly entered the house (under the jurisdiction of Capital Police Station) of a married lady inspector of Odisha Police serving in the Bhubaneswar Economic Offences Wing of the Odisha Crime Branch. The IPS Officer allegedly attempted to drag the lady inspector out of her house and wanted her to marry him.

Later, officials of the Capital police station took the IPS officer into custody.

Parakram Diwas held at DAV K Nagar

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The DAV Public School, Kalinga Nagar observed Parakram Diwas, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, and the birth anniversary of Veer Surendra Sai in its premises. Madan Mohan Panda, Chairman, SMC, Principal Balaram Mahapatra and the invited dignitaries offered floral tributes to the great patriots of India's freedom struggle.



Chief guest Dr Debi Prasad Das, Principal Scientist, CSIR-IMMT, Bhubaneswar, recalled the exemplary valour of Netaji Subhas and Surendra Sai and

their contributions to the freedom movement.

The students recounted the glory and sacrifice of the all-time great leaders through their

beautiful chorus and dance programme. A blood donation camp was organised in which forty-one units of blood was donated by parents and staff

members. Teachers and members of school cabinet visited an old-age home and an orphanage to mark their commitment to joy of giving.

Indian Republic @ 75

Call for Modi to address critical gaps in our growth strategy

The Preamble to the Indian Constitution tries to balance two competing objectives before the State, one of securing all citizens 'Justice, social, economic, and political' and the other of 'ensuring the liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship' and equality of opportunity. Socialism added in 1976 by Indira Gandhi was under legal challenge from the veritable gadfly Subramanian Swamy. CJJ Khanna has tried to put a lid on the controversy by clarifying that the idea of socialism in India meant a welfare State that provides equal opportunity and not a dictatorial dogma rammed down on the citizens.



SATYA NARAYAN MISRA

CJJ Khanna was alluding to the addition to Article 38 in 1976, where it was mandated upon the State 'to minimise income inequalities and 'eliminate inequality in opportunity,' which is at the heart of a highly asymmetric Indian society in terms of access to quality education, healthcare, and adequate nutrition.

Breaking', economic historian Askoka Mody takes several potshots at Nehru's rule for fourteen years, while pulling a few punches at Narendra Modi's ten-year rule. As for Nehru, he deplores his conspicuous lack of attention to human development, particularly quality school education where the budget earmarked was a measly 2% of GDP against 5-6% by other emerging economies like China and South Korea after their independence. The Meiji dynasty (1868-

1912), with its attention to universal quality education, converted Japan from a feudal economy to a modern industrial power. All these three countries have become global manufacturing hubs, because of their strong commitment to human development and participation of women in the process of development. Mao famously said 'Women fill up half the skies.'

As is well known, economic liberalisation embraced by India after 1991 has doubled India's growth rate, exports as % of GDP, savings, and healthy foreign exchange reserves which can buy 9 months' imports as against 15 days in 1991. Interestingly, Modi carried on the free market ideology of Manmohan Singh, with greater gusto. Dismantling of the Planning Commission, privatisation of Air India, liberal FDI, and the plan to privatise PSBs are part of the grand strategy. However, the continued poor performance of India in terms of human development parameters like infant mortality, maternal mortality, mean years of schooling,

malnutrition among children, and anemia among adolescent girls makes India's growth story like a glass half full.

The Kerala Model of development is often contrasted with the Gujarat model, which puts a premium on promoting private enterprise. Modi's tenure as CM from 2000-2013 was marked by subsidizing a few favourite industrialists like Adani to propel economic growth and infrastructure in Gujarat. However, such growth was accompanied by little job creation. Besides, Gujarat's track record in terms of human development has been far from edifying. As per the report card of Niti Aayog on the achievement of SDG targets, 34% of women are anaemic, the quality of education is deficient 48%, and 46% wallow in hunger. In contrast, the human development model adopted by Kerala has ensured that 20% are hungry, 22% of women are anaemic, and 80% enjoy quality education. In contrast, in terms of economic growth, industrial growth, and innovation, Gujarat has a bet-

ter record compared to Kerala and All India trends.

The high level of HDI in Kerala has been due to its handsome allocation of 17% budget to education as against 11.8% in Gujarat. Both the Kothari Committee in 1966 and the New Education Policy (2020) have implored the Centre and the States to spend 6% on GDP as against around 3.5% being spent, with States like Kerala and Delhi being the outliers. Education has been made a fundamental right for children in the age group of 6-14. However, the assessment made by ASER's reports from 2010

reveals serious learning gaps in reading, writing, and numeracy skills. No wonder, 30% of students (including poor parents) prefer to send their children to private schools.

While universal access to education has been achieved in all States, the quality dimension continues to be a matter of serious concern in most States.

Women are considered the most potent catalyst in society when they

are educated as it brings down the birth rate, and improves productivity, with the whole family benefitting. The NFHS V (2019-21) report brings out how anaemia amongst adolescent girls has increased from 52% in 2015-16 to 56% in 2021. As per the UNICEF survey (RSOC Survey: 2014), 63% of adolescent girls are either severely thin or thin, not out of choice but due to inadequate availability of basic nutrition, proteins, micronutrients, and iron and folic acid. The States' promise to have Anaemia Mukta Bharat remains a chimera. The Poshan programme launched in 2018 has so far delivered very little by way of improving the supply chain management and using technology for connecting all stakeholders, except in terms of revving up the propaganda component. Female workforce participation shows a serious downward trajectory (23.7% now as against 70% in China). They are also most vulnerable during dystopia like demonetization.

The World Inequality Report (2023) has brought out how the bot-

tom 50% account for only 7% of total income in India and the top 10% nearly 60% of the national pie. The recently released Oxfam Report strongly suggests that reduction in income inequality and funding the plethora of socially inclusive programmes like ICDS, MDM, SSA and MGNREGA should be achieved by the imposition of 5% wealth tax and 50% tax on the super-rich. The present tendency to fund these programmes through borrowing has the potential of being inflationary. The global experience has been those countries like Russia, Cuba, the USA, Sweden, and China which have invested handsomely in basic education and promoted female workforce participation. Prof Amartya Sen while paying tribute to Dr Manmohan Singh has pointed out his lack of priority to foster quality education as a sad legacy. The 75th Republic Day is a good wake-up call for Modi to make amends for the critical gap in our development strategy.

(Dr Misra is an Professor Emeritus)

Locals gherao Tata Steel (Sponge) gate

Demands include employment
PNS ■ KEONJHAR

A rally of people of five gram panchayats surrounding the Tata Steel (Sponge iron) factory at Bilaipada under Joda block of Keonjhar district gheraoed the plant's main gate in demand of fulfillment of a 16-point charter of demands.

Their main demands were employment to locals instead of candidates of outside the State; free bus service to local students; stopping the discharge of waste materials to the local river/air to check the pollution; and jobs to sons/



daughters of those whose lands have been acquired for construction of the factory.

Local leaders like Dambarudhar Kudada, Zilla Parishad Member, Arjun Behera, Naib Sarapanch, Bharati Munda, Sarpanch and Purna Chandra Naik, ex-Chairman, Joda block spearheaded the rally.

The agitators said the local people had given their fertile agricultural land to the company in the hope that their children would get employment in the plant, but they have been betrayed from the very beginning since 1982 when the factory was established as a joint venture of Ipicol and Tata Steel known as IPI-Tata. After the Tata took over of the company in 2023, it was hoped that the problems of local people would be solved.

Source said the agitation would continue till their demands are fulfilled.

2 tuskers found dead in Cuttack, S'garh

Man injured in elephant attack in M'ghanj
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

At least two tuskers were found dead in Cuttack and Sundargarh districts on Saturday. While the reason of the death of the pachyderms is yet to be ascertained, forest officials have launched a probe into the incidents.

In the first incident reported from Narasinghpur in Cuttack district, the tusker was found dead in a garden close to a gas office in Rangdaba. The tusker is estimated to be between 10 to 12 years old, informed ACF Manoj Patra.



The authorities meanwhile were looking into the circumstances surrounding the death, which appears suspicious. Further investigations are underway to determine whether foul play was involved or if the death was due to natural causes.

Likewise, another tusker's carcass was found in the Ujjalpur Range, near Dikaruwabahal village jungle in Sundargarh district. However, the elephant is believed to have died after being injured in a fight with another pachyderm. According to the District Forest Officer (DFO), the elephant succumbed to its injuries following the clash.

In a different case reported from Mayurbhanj, a potato vendor from Baleswar was severely injured in an elephant attack near Madhapal village under the Jharpokharia Police Station area of Mayurbhanj. The incident occurred when Shatrughan Patra, the victim, had gone to Madhapal to purchase potatoes.

As per reports, he stepped aside to relieve himself in a nearby jungle. During this time, an elephant reportedly attacked him in which he was severely injured and rushed to the Baripada PRM Medical College Hospital for treatment. The unfortunate incident comes at a time when multiple regions of the State have witnessed elephant herds straying into human settlements, causing damage to paddy fields and crops.

Coast Guard hosts training for NCB, DLEA officials

PNS ■ PARADIP

The Coast Guard Headquarters (Odisha) organised a specialised training programme for officers and personnel of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and other Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (DLEAs) from January 20 to 22.

The initiative aimed to enhance maritime interdiction capabilities and strengthen efforts against drug trafficking through sea routes.

The training focused on equipping participants with advanced knowledge and skills to tackle maritime narcotics smuggling. Key areas of focus included operational safety awareness, law enforcement practices, search and seizure techniques, inter-agency



collaboration, and simulation exercises.

With the increasing prevalence of transnational drug smuggling via maritime routes, the programme reinforced the Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) commitment to securing India's maritime borders.

Addressing the participants, Deputy Inspector General Sanjay Negi, Commander of Coast Guard (Odisha), emphasized the importance of a unified and coordinated approach to effectively combat maritime narcotics trafficking. He highlighted the significance of inter-agency cooperation and capacity building in addressing the growing challenges of drug trafficking at sea.

Senior officials from the NCB and DLEAs lauded the training for its comprehensive and practical approach, expressing confidence in its contribution to improving operational readiness and effectiveness in maritime law enforcement.

The Indian Coast Guard remains dedicated to combating maritime crimes and safeguarding India's maritime zones. Through initiatives like this training, the ICG continues to foster strong inter-agency coordination and establish a robust framework for enforcing laws at sea.

NITR Prof, team develop eco-friendly cooling tech

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Prof Saroj L Samal and his group from NIT-R, in their research, have recently unfolded how harnessing the magnetocaloric effect can work wonders for sustainable cooling.

Magnetic cooling or magnetocaloric effect (MCE) is an environment friendly and clean technology, which can substitute the conventional gas compression (CGC) for cooling applications. Unlike CGC, which depends on the compression and expansion of refrigerant gases, MCE works based on the reversible magnetisation of suitable materials in the existence of a

magnetic field, which can lead to adiabatic heating or cooling. One of the significant advantages of MCE over CGC is its lower environmental impact, said Prof Samal.

Prof. Samal who did considerable research on, "Harnessing the Magnetocaloric Effect from Earth Abundant Elements: A Technology for Sustainable Cooling" further revealed that, CGC systems typically use refrigerant gases such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which are known to be harmful to the ozone layer and contribute to climate change. In contrast, MCE systems do not use such harmful gases, making them a more environmentally friendly alternative. Another advantage of MCE is its higher cooling efficiency. MCE-based cooling systems have been shown to have 20-50% higher efficiency than CGC systems, meaning they can achieve the same cooling effect with less energy consumption. This increased efficiency can lead to significant cost savings and a lower carbon footprint.

Magnetocaloric materials have the ability to undergo temperature changes when subjected to varying magnetic fields. These materials are of interest due to their potential for innovative cooling applications, he added.

Boudh dist has many hidden gems for tourists

Development of sites, propaganda need of hour
MAHESH SATPATHY ■ BOUDH

Boudh, with its rich history and stunning natural beauty, is primed to emerge as a top tourist destination. To unlock its full potential, local leaders and social activists must join forces to attract world attention to the district's tourist spots and invest in the hidden gems.

Key attractions ripe for development include Kushang-Tikarpada in Harbhanga, Bhairavi Temple in Purunakatak, Marjakud in Boudh, Charisambhu Temple in Gandhradi, Khani Kandpa in Sagada, Veeramunda in



Kantamal, Naikpada Caves in Boudh and Dedhsur Bhaibahu Temple in Ghantapada etc.

With its unique advantages, including natural geography and lower construction costs, these places have the potential to become the premier tourist destinations.

With the advent of modern technology and machinery, construction work has become significantly easier and more efficient. The use of the latest machines and equipment can greatly accelerate infrastructure development projects, enabling them to be completed much faster and with greater precision. Strategic investment in these sites can generate revenue, create jobs, and showcase Boudh's beauty globally. A targeted global advertising campaign can help unlock the district's tourism potential.

According to intellectual circles, the "double engine" government is well-positioned to execute these plans, paving the way for Boudh's growth into a thriving tourist hub.

In Keonjhar Woman's half-burnt body found in forest

Murder suspected
PNS ■ KEONJHAR

A half-burnt and decomposed body of an unidentified woman was recovered from a forest near Champeidahi, a tribal hamlet under Ghasipura police station limits in Keonjhar district, on Saturday.

Sources indicated that local police arrived at the scene after receiving reports of a decomposing body. The crime scene was located deep inside the forests and away from any settlements. Further, a pack of matchsticks and



clothes reportedly belonging to the deceased woman were found scattered near the body raising suspicions of murder.

As per a preliminary analysis based on the evidence au-

spot but no tracks leading to them have been found as of yet.

Police, after examining the corpse, also stated that the woman was likely to be in her 30s. However, further details could only be ascertained after a forensic analysis. Till the last reports, a scientific team was called to the site and police were involved in evidence gathering.

In a puzzling state of affairs, no local resident had any clue of the half-burnt body lying not far from their village nor have they revealed any information regarding the case or relayed any possible clues to the police.

In Bargarh Clash over liquor brewery: 1 killed, 2 injured

A person was killed and two others were critically injured in a group clash over some issues pertaining to a liquor brewery at Guduramunda village under Bheden block in Bargarh district on Friday night. The injured have been admitted to a nearby hospital in critical conditions. They are currently undergoing treatment there. A person in this connection has been detained by Bheden police. As per reports, a group of people launched a deadly assault on another group on Friday night over some issues pertaining to the liquor brewery. Residents of Guduramunda are in shock over the incident, and concerns remain high regarding safety and stability in the community. The situation in the area is reportedly tense.

Upon being informed, Bheden police reached the spot and started an investigation over the incident. As a precautionary measure, police have been deployed in the village to maintain peace and prevent further disturbances. However, the motive behind the attack is yet to be ascertained.

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ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଆମେ ଏଚ.ଆଇ.ଭି./ଏଡସ୍ ସଂକ୍ରମଣକୁ ରୋକିବା

ଏଚ.ଆଇ.ଭି. କିପରି ବ୍ୟାପେ

- ଅସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ଯୌନ ସମ୍ପର୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା
- ଏଚ.ଆଇ.ଭି. ସଂକ୍ରମିତ ରକ୍ତ କିମ୍ବା ରକ୍ତଜାତ ପଦାର୍ଥ ବ୍ୟବହାର ଦ୍ୱାରା
- ବିଶୋଧିତ ହୋଇ ନ ଥିବା ଛୁଇଁ ବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ବ୍ୟବହୃତ ଛୁଇଁ ଦ୍ୱାରା
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ଏଚ.ଆଇ.ଭି. କିପରି ବ୍ୟାପେ ନାହିଁ

- ହାତ ମିଳାଇବା ଦ୍ୱାରା
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- ମଶା କାମୁଡ଼ିବା ଦ୍ୱାରା

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର - <https://osacs.odisha.gov.in/> ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରାଜ୍ୟ ଏଡସ୍ ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ ସମିତି (ବାୟୁ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର)

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ଅଧିକ ଜାଣିବା ପାଇଁ ୧୦୯୭ କୁ କଲ କରନ୍ତୁ।

R-Day Parade: India to display military might, cultural heritage

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India is set to showcase its military prowess and rich cultural heritage and display a symbolic confluence of 'virasat' and 'vikas' on Kartavya Path here to mark the 76th Republic Day on January 26 when the nation will also commemorate the platinum jubilee of the enactment of the Constitution.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto will be the chief guest on the occasion. A 352-member marching and band contingent from Indonesia will be participating in the parade.

Subianto will be the fourth Indonesian president to attend India's Republic Day celebrations. Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, was the chief guest at India's first Republic Day celebrations in 1950.

While 75 years of the Constitution is the focus of celebrations this year, the theme for the tableaux is 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.

Sixteen tableaux from across states and Union Territories and 15 from central ministries, departments and organisations will roll down the ceremonial boulevard on Sunday.

The country will display its military prowess by showcasing some of the cutting-edge defence platforms including BrahMos, Pinaka and Akash, with the Army's Battle Surveillance System 'Sanjay' and DRDO's surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Pralay' set to register their presence in the ceremonial parade for the first time.

T-90 'Bhishma' tanks Sarath (infantry carrying vehicle BMP-II), Short Span Bridging System 10m, Nag Missile System, multi-barrel rocket launcher system 'Agnibaan' and 'Bajrang' (light specialist vehicle) will also be part of the parade, officials said on Thursday.

The parade will see many other firsts as well, such as the tri-services tableau that will depict the spirit of 'jointness' among the armed forces.

The tableau would display a battlefield scenario demonstrating a synchronised operation in land, water and air with the indigenous Arjun battle tank, Tejas fighter aircraft and advanced light helicopter, according to the Defence Ministry.

The theme of the tri-services tableau will be 'Shashakt aur Surakshit Bharat' (Strong and



Secure India). Besides, the DRDO will present a tableau with the theme 'Raksha Kavach' -- multi-layer protection against multi-domain threats, officials said.

President Droupadi Murmu will deliver an address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day. This January 26 will carry extra significance as India's Constitution, which came into effect on this historic day in 1950, completes 75 years.

The Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949. Before the parade, Prime



Minister Narendra Modi will lead the nation in paying tribute to the country's martyrs by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial.

The parade will begin in the morning with the National Salute and will continue for 90 minutes, reflecting the journey of India's heritage and growth. C-130J Super Hercules, C-295, C-17 Globemaster, P-8I, MiG-29 and Su-30, among other aircraft, will also take part in the celebrations.

The ceremonial parade will be heralded by 300 cultural artistes playing 'Sare Jahan Se Achha' on

musical instruments representing different parts of the country, according to the Defence Ministry.

Lt Gen Bhavnish Kumar, General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area will be the Parade Commander, while Parade Second-in-Command will be Chief of Staff (COS), Delhi Area, Maj Gen Sumit Mehta.

Maj Gen Mehta said the event will showcase India's military prowess with a number of cutting-edge platforms and a range of vibrant tableaux depicting the country's heritage.

Two Param Vir Chakra awardees -- both Kargil war heroes -- and one Ashok Chakra awardee will be part of the parade, he said.

The flypast will feature 40 Indian Air Force aircraft and three Dornier aircraft of the Indian Coast Guard.

The Indian Army will be represented by a mounted column, eight mechanised columns, and six marching contingents, officials said. The column will be represented by the 61 Cavalry. The marching columns will consist of contingents from the Brigade of the Guards contingent, Jat Regiment, Garhwal Rifles Regiment, J&K Light Infantry (JAKLI) regiment and a contingent of the Corps of Engineers.

Capt Ritika Khareta will be the contingent commander of a marching contingent of the Army's Corps of Signals. The officer is the only woman member of her contingent and the rest are men.

There will also be a motorcycle display by daredevils of the Corps of Signals. Capt Ashish Rana will be its leader and Capt Dimple Singh Bhati, the second in line.

"I will be riding a ladder on a motorcycle and give a salute to the president during the parade," Bhati said soon after the full dress rehearsal on January 23.

Capt Rana said Capt Bhati would become the "first woman officer" from the Army to give the ladder-borne salute to the president in the history of Republic Day celebrations.

States that will display their tableaux during the 76th Republic Day Parade include Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Delhi and Chandigarh will showcase them among the Union Territories.

CCPA imposes ₹3 Lakh penalty on Vision IAS for misleading UPSC exam advertisements

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 3 lakh on Vision IAS for deceptive advertising about its students' success in the civil services examination. The authority found that Vision IAS deliberately withheld specific course information, creating a misleading impression about its success rates in such exams, a statement by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution said.

The institute's advertisement claimed "10 in Top 10 selections in CSE 2020 from various programs of Vision IAS" and prominently displayed successful candidates and pictures. Vision IAS mentioned the course opted by AIR 1- UPSC CSE 2020 i.e. GS Foundation Batch Classroom Student but



deliberately concealed information regarding the courses chosen by the other nine successful candidates.

This concealment created misleading impression that the remaining nine candidates were also enrolled in the 'GS Foundation Batch Classroom Student' course which was not

costing ₹1,40,000/-, whereas the Abhyaas one-time prelims mock test costs only Rs 750. As per the available information, Rank 1 enrolled in the Foundation Course 2018 (Classroom/Offline), and Rank 8 enrolled in the Online Foundation Course 2015 of the Institute. CCPA found that Rank 2, Rank 3, Rank 5, Rank 7, Rank 8, and Rank 10 of UPSC CSE 2020 enrolled in the GS Mains Test Series. This comes into play in Mains examination i.e. after clearing prelims examination which is a screening test wherein approximately only 1% students able to clear the said stage, making it the toughest stage with the most competition.

The above-mentioned students took GS Mains test series which is one of the various components of the Mains examination which implies that the afore-

mentioned candidates cleared the prelims and interview stages on their own, without any contribution of opposite party. Additionally, Rank 4 and Rank 9 of UPSC CSE 2020 enrolled in Abhyaas test, a mock test for the Prelims exam. Rank 6 enrolled in the GS Prelims Test Series. This implies that the above-mentioned candidates cleared the Mains and Interview stages on their own, without any contribution of opposite party. By deliberately concealing about the specific course opted by each of the successful candidates, the Vision IAS made it look like all the courses offered by it had the same success rate for the consumers, which was not right. These facts are important for the potential students to decide on the courses that may be suitable for them and should not have been concealed in the advertisement. CCPA has observed

that several coaching institutes use the same successful candidate's names and photographs in their advertisements while deliberately concealing important information about specific course opted by them to create a deception that the successful candidates were regular classroom students at coaching institute or were students of several courses offered in the advertisement.

The commission imposed a penalty to protect 'young and impressionable aspirants' from potentially deceptive marketing practices, the statement said.

The CCPA has so far issued 46 notices to various coaching institutes for misleading advertisements and unfair trade practice. It has imposed a penalty of Rs 74.60 lakh on 23 coaching institutes and directed them to discontinue the misleading advertisements.

942 police personnel awarded gallantry and service medals



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 942 police, fire and civil defence personnel have been awarded different categories of gallantry and service medals on the eve of the Republic Day, according to a government statement issued on Saturday.

These include 95 gallantry medals.

The awardees include the personnel of police, fire, home guard and civil defence and those working in correctional services, the Union home ministry said.

Among the gallantry award winners, 28 deployed in Left Wing Extremism-affected areas, 28 in the Jammu and Kashmir region, three in the northeast and 36 posted in other regions are being awarded for their gallant action, it said.

Of the 101 President's Medals for Distinguished Service (PSM), 85 have been awarded to police personnel, five to fire services person-

nel, seven to civil defence and home guard service and four to correctional service. Among the 746 Medals for Meritorious Service (MSM), 634 have been awarded to police service, 37 to fire service, 39 to civil defence and home guard service and 36 to correctional service, the statement said.

The Medal for Gallantry (GM) is awarded for a rare conspicuous act of gallantry and a conspicuous act of gallantry respectively in saving life and property or in preventing crime or arresting criminals, the risk incurred being estimated with due regard to the obligations and duties of the officer concerned.

The President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) is awarded for a special distinguished record in service and the Medal for Meritorious Service (MSM) is awarded for valuable service characterised by resource and devotion to duty.

NHRC admits petition on mysterious deaths in J and K's Rajouri

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The NHRC has admitted a petition filed by a Jammu-based RTI activist over the mysterious deaths of 17 people from three Scheduled Tribe families in a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district during the past one-and-a-half months.

In his petition to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Raman Sharma sought the statutory body's intervention to ensure "justice, relief and proactive measures to safeguard the rights and dignity of citizens in vulnerable areas".

17 people, including 13 children, died under mysterious circumstances in Badhaal village

between December 7 and January 19. The patients complained of fever, pain, intense sweating, nausea and loss of consciousness before dying within days of their admission to hospitals.

Investigations and samples collected empirically indicated the incidents were not due to a communicable disease of bacterial or viral origin and that there was no public health angle, prompting police to set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) after certain neurotoxins were found in the samples of the deceased. A central inter-ministerial team has also joined the multi-agency probe to unravel the mystery behind the deaths.

"The families and community of Badhaal village urgently need support.

Congress slams Election Commission on National voters' day, alleging erosion of institutional integrity

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday hit out at the Election Commission on Saturday, saying the "self-congratulation" on National Voters' Day would not obscure the fact that the poll panel as it has been functioning makes a "mockery" of the Constitution and is an insult to the voters themselves.

The opposition party also alleged that over the past decade, the professionalism and independence of the Election Commission has been "severely compromised" by the duo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. In a social media post, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, "Even as we celebrate National Voters' Day, the cease-



less erosion of the institutional integrity of the Election Commission of India, in the last ten years, is a matter of grave national concern."

"Our Election Commission of India and our Parliamentary Democracy, despite widespread doubts, over the decades, turned out to be impartial, independent and ideal to emulate globally," he said. The realisation of universal adult suffrage, extending to

the grassroots levels of panchayat and urban local bodies embodies the vision of our founders, he said. "However, complacency in upholding democratic processes can inadvertently pave the way for authoritarianism. Therefore, safeguarding the independence of our institutions is essential to preserve our democracy and uphold the constitutional principles that underpin it," Kharge said.

The National Voters' Day has been celebrated for the past 15 years to mark the inception of the Election Commission (EC) on January 25, 1950, a day before India became a republic. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "There will be a lot of self-congratulation today but that will not obscure the fact that the Election Commission as it

has been functioning makes a mockery of the Constitution and is an insult to the voters themselves."

"Today has been celebrated as National Voters Day since 2011 to mark the day on which the Election Commission came into being 75 years ago on Jan 25th, 1950," he noted. The Election Commission is a Constitutional body and its first Chairman was the legendary Sukumar Sen whose role in establishing the foundations of our electoral democracy was crucial, Ramesh said. "He was the sole Chief Election Commissioner for eight years. His Report on the First General Elections in India 1951-52 is a classic. But the preparations of the draft electoral roll for the first elections had been completed before Sen took over," he said.

31 CBI officers awarded Police medals on 76th Republic Day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Officers who supervised probes into the Manipur riots, online trading scams, big-ticket corruption and the post-poll violence in West Bengal are among 31 officers awarded police medals on the occasion of 76th Republic Day.

Six officers have been awarded the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service while 25 received the Police Medal for Meritorious Service, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said in a statement.

CBI Joint Director Ghanshyam Upadhyay was awarded the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

He supervised the probes into the post-poll violence in West Bengal, Manipur riots, Commonwealth Games corruption, land for jobs scam against Lalu Prasad Yadav and his family, 2024 NEET irregularities, important cases related to the Assam Ponzi scam, besides leading several complex special



crime cases.

Joint Director (North East Region) Datla Sreenivasa Varma, who is supervising the probe into the online trading scam of Assam, and now post-poll violence cases of West Bengal and further investigation in the Manipur riots, has also been awarded the medal.

Assistant Inspector General (CBI, Policy Division) Tejpal Singh, Deputy Superintendent of Police Naresh Kumar, Sub-Inspector Bhani Singh Rathore and Assistant Sub-Inspector Aikodan Balakrishnan are also among

CEC Rajiv Kumar urges parties to avoid disruptive campaigning

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar on Saturday requested political parties to avoid "disruptive campaigning" and "fake narratives", saying it might cause disillusionment among youngsters regarding the electoral process.

He was addressing the 15th National Voters' Day event here in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and representatives of political parties.

At the same time, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kumar assured political parties that the Election Commission (EC) would respond in writing to concerns flagged by them on the electoral process and the suggestions made by them to improve the system.

His remarks came on a day the

opposition Congress hit out at the EC, saying its "self-congratulation" on the occasion would not obscure the fact that the poll panel's functioning had made a "mockery" of the Constitution and insulted the voters. Kumar also flagged the "dangerous trend" all over the world of misinformation and fake narratives, calling them the single-biggest threat to democratic processes worldwide.

"I would also urge them to avoid disruptive campaigning so that our youth do not get disillusioned and move away from the electoral process," Kumar said.

"We assure them, with all respect and humility, that whenever they ask any question or give any suggestion to improve the electoral process, we will look into it with all sincerity, make improvements and also give them a written response. But we must avoid fake narratives, I would like to add," he added.

Haryana minister reviews progress of global city project on Dwarka expressway

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Haryana Industry and Commerce, Environment, Forest and Wildlife Minister Rao Narbir Singh chaired a review meeting and visited the proposed Global City on Dwarka Expressway on Saturday.

During the visit, officers associated with the project were also accompanied and informed the minister about the progress made so far about the project.

Cabinet Minister Rao Narbir Singh said that Gurugram is a city of possibilities. On one hand, the world's largest jungle safari project is going to come to fruition, while on the other hand, the work of developing the country's first global city is also going on at a rapid pace. Taking Gurugram's global identity to new heights is the priority of the Haryana government.

"Gurugram city remains a centre of attraction for investors from all over the world. With the devel-



opment of a global city, the investment possibilities here will increase. This global city is being developed on 1003 acres of land between NPR and CPR in Gurugram. In which a detailed plan of large and small plots has been made," he said. The minister said that the work of its first phase will be completed by the end of next year.

"Fortune 500 companies of the world are already in touch with the state government with interest in investing in the global city. With the quick success of new

residential and industrial development projects in the district and the constantly improving connectivity, the possibilities of expansion of development in the entire area of the district are stronger, which will bring a change in the social status of the people," he added.

Global City would be a world-class futuristic city being planned in Gurugram on Dwarka Expressway, based on live, work, and play at its core and a transit-oriented walk-to-work based future-ready and environmentally resilient design.

The officials informed him that the city has multiple access from National Highway-48, Pataudi Road NH 352W and Dwarka Expressway and has a mixed land use of 56.08% commercial, 40.05% residential, 2.73% institutional and 1.14% utility with an average FAR of 3 (ranging from 1.5 to 12.5) with approximately 6 km long green corridor to promote healthy living with tranquil Artificial Lakes.

First Constitution of Akhand Hindu Rashtra to be unveiled at Maha Kumbh

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The first constitution of the proposed Akhand Hindu Rashtra has been finalized and is set to be unveiled on the auspicious occasion of Vasant Panchami on February 3 during the Maha Kumbh. The 501-page document has been crafted over 12 months and 12 days by a committee of 25 scholars from North and South India. Drawing inspiration from Ram Rajya, the kingdom of Lord Krishna, Manusmriti, and Chanakya's Arthashastra, the constitution is envisioned as a blueprint for a Hindu Rashtra. Once approved by the four Shankaracharyas, it will be presented to the central government. The drafting committee includes experts from Banaras Hindu University, Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, and Central Sanskrit University. According to Swami Anand Swaroop Maharaj, the head of Shambhavi Peeth and patron of the committee, the constitution aims to establish a Hindu Rashtra by 2035. He emphasized that the proposed nation would be a republic founded on the principles of Vasudhaiva



Kutumbakam (the world is one family) and Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah (may all be happy). While elections will determine the nation's leader, the constitution assures that followers of all religions will have the right to live in the country. However, strict measures will be enforced against those involved in anti-national activities.

The draft proposes a unicameral legislature called the Hindu Dharma Parliament, comprising 543 members elected as Dharma MPs. Only followers of Sanatan Dharma and Indian-origin faiths such as Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism will be eligible to vote or contest elections. The voting age is set at 16 years, while candidates must be at least 25 years old and graduates of Vedic Gurukuls. Dharma MPs will receive only basic allowances, such as constituency funding, transportation, and security. They will also be required to submit regular progress reports. Dissatisfied constituents can recall their representatives by filing a no-confidence motion with a minimum of 50,000 signatures. The president of the Hindu Rashtra will be selected by a two-thirds majority of the Dharma Parliament. To qualify, candidates must have expertise in Dharmashastra and Rajashastra, along with five years of practical governance experience. They must also demonstrate leadership skills, knowledge of statecraft, and proficiency in the use of arms. During times of war, the president will lead the armed forces.

Baba Artatrana claims to heal the incurable with divine touch



BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The ongoing Mahakumbh event is a mesmerizing spectacle of faith, devotion, and spirituality, drawing millions of pilgrims and seekers from across the globe. Amid this sea of humanity, the presence of extraordinary spiritual figures adds an almost otherworldly dimension to the event. Among them, Baba Artatrana stands out, cloaked in mystique and reverence, claiming to possess the divine power to cure even the gravest ailments with the touch of his feet. In an atmosphere thick with awe and wonder, long queues of hopeful devotees stretch endlessly, each awaiting the miraculous touch they believe can dispel their suffering. "I have been performing this divine treatment since 2007," Baba Artatrana told ANI, his voice calm yet brimming with conviction. "No food, no drink, no medicines are needed. Just my touch, my voice over the phone, or listening to my mantra on YouTube can cure even the most complex diseases." Baba Artatrana's claims, though extraordinary, have a magnetic pull that captivates thousands. He asserts that his divine touch has a success rate of 99%, a gift he attributes to the blessings of Lord Shiva. "This is Shiva's blessing. With his grace, I can cure even the greatest illnesses in an instant. I don't know why God chose me for such immense power, but I use it as He teaches-to heal," he said, his words sparking wonder and devotion in the hearts of his listeners. The aura around Baba Artatrana deepens when he speaks of his role during the COVID-19 pandemic. With a tone of serene confidence, he claimed, "During the pandemic, I challenged the Odisha government and cured millions of people with a simple touch." His influence extends beyond India's borders, as he shares tales of traveling to foreign lands to spread the benefits of his divine powers.

Seeking freedom from abuse, two UP women defy norms and marry each other

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
GORAKHPUR

In a courageous act of defiance, two women from Gorakhpur, tired of enduring years of domestic violence from their alcoholic husbands, left their abusive homes behind to marry each other. Kavita and Gunja, also known as Bablu, tied the knot at the Shiva Temple, commonly referred to as Choti Kashi, in Deoria on Thursday evening. The duo, who bonded over shared experiences of physical and emotional abuse, connected via social media and grew close as they offered each other solace. Over time, their relationship blossomed into a source of strength, culminating in their decision to embark on a life together, free from violence. During the simple yet symbolic ceremony, Gunja assumed the role of the groom, performing the traditional Hindu rituals of applying sindoor (vermillion), exchanging garlands, and taking the seven pheras. Kavita, standing resolutely by her side, embraced this new beginning as they vowed to build a peaceful life together. "Our husbands' drinking and abusive behavior left us with no choice but to take control of our lives," Gunja shared after the ceremony. "We decided to leave behind the pain and focus on a future built on love and mutual respect. We plan to settle in Gorakhpur and work to sustain ourselves." The temple priest, Uma Shankar Pandey, who facilitated the ceremony,

described the event as quiet yet significant. "They came, performed their rituals with garlands and sindoor, and left. It was a poignant moment that reflects their determination to escape their pasts," he remarked. Their story has drawn attention to the pervasive issue of domestic violence, which often remains hidden due to fear, stigma, and societal pressures. Lenin Raghuvanshi, a leading human rights activist, lauded their courage. "This act is not just a rejection of abuse; it's a powerful statement against the systemic oppression women face. It underscores the urgent need to address domestic violence and ensure women's safety at home," he said. Experts point out that domestic violence, often fueled by alcoholism, remains a widespread issue in India. Many victims endure years of abuse due to financial dependency and lack of support. Social worker Shabnam Mishra highlighted the broader implications of Kavita and Gunja's decision: "Their story is a testament to how women can reclaim their agency and inspire others to break free from abusive cycles." As Kavita and Gunja embark on this bold new journey, their act of resistance serves as a beacon of hope for countless others trapped in similar circumstances. Their story is not just about personal liberation but a reminder of the need for systemic change to address the scourge of domestic violence.

Demand for public holidays during Maha Kumbh

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Vishisht BTC Shikshak Welfare Association has requested the Uttar Pradesh government to declare public holidays on the dates of the Shahi Snan during the ongoing Maha Kumbh. In a letter to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the association has sought three days of public holidays for all state employees and teachers to allow them to participate in the holy bath and religious rituals with their families. Santosh Tiwari, the provincial president of the association, and Dilip Chauhan, state secretary of the joint forum, emphasized



the rarity of this Maha Kumbh, which occurs after 144 years. They stated that it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many, as future generations might not witness such an event. The association has urged the state government to consider their demand positively, allowing people to partake in this historic event. Provincial media in-charge Vineet Singh specifically

requested public holidays on significant bathing dates such as Mauni Amavasya, Basant Panchami, and Maghi Purnima so that everyone can take a holy dip at the Maha Kumbh. Demand to Merge DA with Salaries Raised to PM The Indian Public Service Employees Federation (IPSEF) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to announce the merging of 50% dearness allowance (DA) with salaries, as was practiced earlier. IPSEF's national president, VP Mishra, highlighted that when DA exceeds 50% of the salary, it is traditionally merged with the base salary, a practice upheld by all past pay commissions.

Not only devotees, Maha Kumbh witnesses surge in beggars, many feigning wounds for sympathy

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■
MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj is not just a spiritual event for millions of pilgrims but also a magnet for thousands of beggars, many employing creative or deceitful tactics to evoke sympathy and collect alms. At Sangam Ghat, a woman sat near the water's edge, writhing in apparent pain while displaying a deep wound on her hand. With a plate placed before her, she repeatedly raised her injured hand, attracting a steady stream of coins, notes, and even grains from pilgrims. By evening, she packed her grains into a sack with the help of a man and quietly disappeared, her tactics carefully crafted to draw the maximum charity from those moved by the spirit of giving. Pilgrims, however, seem unfazed by the questionable authenticity of such wounds. "When you come to the Kumbh, giving alms is part of the faith," said Shyam Sundar Yadav, a farmer from Hardoi. "Whether the wounds are fake or real is not my concern. My dharm is to give." **A Surge in Beggars from Across India**

Before the event began, authorities estimated around 7,000 beggars in Prayagraj. Now, their numbers have ballooned to over 50,000 as pilgrims from districts like Pratapgarh, Mirzapur, Chitrakoot, Varanasi, and Kaushambi, as well as states like Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh, flock to the Kumbh. For many, the event represents a rare opportunity to collect alms on a scale impossible elsewhere. "Beggars are a natural part of religious events like this," said Meera Devi, a teacher from Kanpur. "For us, donating to them is a way to earn good karma. If they are lying or deceiving, it is on them, not us." The Mela's prime begging spots include Sangam Ghat, Akshar Vat, Akharas, and the Reclining Hanuman Temple. In these areas, beggars position themselves strategically, occupying fixed spots that they return to daily. At Sangam Nose, where devotees gather for holy dips, over 100 beggars line up to solicit alms. Many display gruesome injuries-often fake. According to locals, these injuries are often crafted using animal fat and other materials to maintain the appearance of



fresh wounds while keeping flies at bay. Pain-relief balms are sometimes applied to create an impression of genuine suffering. These "wounds" are refreshed daily, and the illusion is enough to convince most devotees. Adding to the spectacle are children dressed as deities, drawing particular attention from pilgrims. Eight-year-old Arti (name changed), dressed as Radha near the Hanuman Temple, shared her story. "It takes me an hour to get ready," she said, smiling. "Mummy also dresses like me and does the same work. Yesterday, I earned ₹500." Sushma and her family arrived from Koraon in Prayagraj a week ago, capitalizing on the massive influx of pilgrims. Such stories are common in areas like Sector 20, where thousands of beggars, including children, line the streets. A boy from Jamalpur in Jaunpur revealed that nearly 500 people from his village alone had come to beg at the Kumbh. For some pilgrims, these children are difficult to ignore. "When a child dressed as Radha or Krishna asks for alms, how can you say no?" asked Sunita Verma, a homemaker from Agra. "It feels like giving to God directly."

Situation The administration has been trying to tackle the surge in beggars. Vehicles frequently patrol key areas, picking up beggars and transporting them to shelters or hospitals. "Every night, the police come and take many of us away," said Sandeep, a disabled beggar near the Hanuman Temple. "But we always return the next day." Vinay Kumar, a senior official overseeing operations, said, "We try to document every beggar we pick up and encourage them to return home, but they keep coming back. The tradition of charity during Kumbh is too strong, and they know they will get alms here." Despite these efforts, beggars persist. Many see the Mela as their best chance to make a living, even if it means enduring repeated evictions. The practice of giving alms during religious events like the Kumbh is deeply ingrained in Indian culture. "Charity during such occasions is an age-old tradition," explained Dr. Dhyanajay Chopra, a professor at Allahabad University and an expert on the Maha Kumbh. "Bathing, meditation, and donation form the triad of spiritual practices at the Kumbh. This attracts not only genuine beggars but also those who exploit the generosity of devotees." For pilgrims like Ram Narayan Singh, a retired school principal from Ghazipur, the authenticity of beggars is irrelevant. "This is my way of connecting with God," he said. "I don't care if the person is genuinely needy or pretending. My act of giving is what matters." **Faith, Generosity, and Deception** The Maha Kumbh, a grand spectacle of faith, charity, and devotion, also reveals the complex interplay between spirituality and exploitation. While some beggars genuinely struggle to survive, the prevalence of deceitful tactics raises questions about the morality of exploiting faith. Yet for most devotees, the act of giving remains sacred, a way to fulfill their spiritual duties and earn divine blessings. As the Kumbh continues, the presence of beggars-both genuine and feigned-serves as a stark reminder of the enduring power of faith and the many ways it can be interpreted, celebrated, and, at times, manipulated.

Jammu and Kashmir police officers honoured for foiling Amarnath yatra terror attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
JAMMU

Seven of the 15 Jammu and Kashmir Police officers, including former Kashmir Zone inspector general of police Vijay Kumar, awarded gallantry medals on the eve of Republic Day, played a key role in averting a possible terror attack on the Amarnath Yatra three years ago. The Medal for Gallantry recipients also included Humayun Bhat, a deputy superintendent of police who was one of four officers to lay down their lives



during an encounter with terrorists in south Kashmir's

Kokernag in September 2023. Bhat had been honoured with the Kirti Chakra for extraordinary bravery on the eve of last year's Independence Day. In addition to the 15 gallantry medals, Anand Jain and Nitish Kumar -- two additional directors general of police-rank officers -- received the President's Medal for Distinguished Service while 10 other officers were awarded the Medal for Meritorious Service. During his tenure in

Kashmir as inspector general of police, Kumar generated an input that a group of terrorists were planning to carry out an attack on the annual Amarnath Yatra in June 2022, the officials said on Saturday. On June 14, a small police party headed by Rakesh Balwal, the-then Srinagar senior superintendent of police, under Kumar's supervision, stopped a vehicle at Bemina on the outskirts of the city, leading to an encounter. The officials said two hardcore

terrorists, including a Pakistani, were eliminated during the operation that was conducted without the assistance of the Army, the Central Reserve Police Force, and intelligence agencies. Kumar, who was later promoted to additional director general of police and recently transferred to the AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre's Delhi segment, Balwal and five other police personnel, received the gallantry medal for their bravery.

Kumar, a standout officer whose service record includes a unique combination of expertise in anti-terrorist, anti-Maoist and law-and-order operations within and outside Jammu and Kashmir, has played a significant role in the fight to counter terror threats and maintain peace post the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha congratulated the officers on their achievement. "Congratulations to police personnel and officers who have been conferred with the Medal for Gallantry, President's Medal for Distinguished Service and Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Republic Day 2025," Sinha said in a post on X. He also paid tribute to selection-grade fireman Satish Kumar Raina, who was posthumously conferred with the Medal for Gallantry for sacrificing his life while performing his duties during a fire incident in Jammu's Prem Nagar area.

YSRCP leader V Vijayasai Reddy resigns as RS member

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

YSRCP leader V Vijayasai Reddy on Saturday resigned as a member of Rajya Sabha and announced he was quitting politics due to "personal reasons". The fourth party MP to short-terminate their terms in the Upper House since its rout in the 2024 Assembly elections. He met Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar at his residence and submitted his resignation.

Reddy, a chartered accountant by profession who represented Andhra Pradesh in the House, later told reporters he still had three-and-a-half-years left in his second six-year term, but he was resigning due to personal reasons. He said he would be focussing on agriculture and delivering guest lectures at universities henceforth. "I have submitted my resignation to the vice president and the chairman of the Rajya Sabha, and he has accepted it,"

Reddy told reporters after meeting Dhankhar. "I, hereby, voluntarily resign from my seat in the Rajya Sabha with immediate effect as a member representing Andhra Pradesh from the Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress party (YSRCP). Requesting you to kindly accept my resignation," his short resignation letter to the VP stated. In a post on X, Reddy also shared pictures of his meeting with the vice president "Today, I

submitted my resignation to the Hon'ble Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji. Hon'ble Chairman of Rajya Sabha is pleased to accept the resignation with immediate effect duly recording the proceedings," he posted. Reddy said that before accepting his resignation, the vice president asked him specifically what are the reasons he was submitting his papers, and if it was voluntary or is there any coercion or undue influence.

AP CM Chandrababu Naidu defends Davos Visit to WEF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said on Saturday a visit to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, is not just about inking agreements but networking with influential people to gain insights into the direction the world is headed. Addressing a press conference on his recent

visit to Davos, the Chief Minister brushed aside criticism from some quarters, including YSRCP, that the high-level delegation led by him returned empty-handed and focused solely on Naidu's self-promotion, while other states managed to forge deals. "Davos is a place for networking. The whole world goes there for four days. Country heads and

ministers attend. Not only governments, but all corporations will be there," said the CM, adding that there is a myth about Davos, where people only consider the number of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed and the amount of money flowing in the form of investments. According to Naidu, the WEF in the Swiss resort town of Davos brings

together the best minds for knowledge enhancement and learning the latest trends. The TDP supremo asserted that he spoke to several key people during the summit, including Microsoft founder Bill Gates, and observed that meeting all of them in their home countries would be a herculean task, involving visas, appointments, and several other challenges.



Family Drama on Stage

Shailesh Lodha's theatre debut delivers humour, emotion and family chaos, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



When I first heard that Shailesh Lodha was making his debut on the theatre stage in *Dad's Girlfriend*, I was intrigued. Known for his wit and charming presence on television, particularly for his role in *Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah*, Lodha's transition to theatre seemed like an exciting challenge. His comedic timing and subtle humour have made him a household name, but how would that translate to the stage, where the dynamics are different and every performance is live?

The play *Dad's Girlfriend* turned out to be a delightful mix of humour, family dynamics and emotional complexity. Lodha plays Animesh, a successful author and professor who returns to his estranged daughter Diya and her husband Kanav after years of emotional distance. From the outset, it becomes evident that the story is not only about comedy but also about reconnecting, understanding, and navigating personal challenges within a family. Lodha brings a grounded yet comedic presence to Animesh, capturing his complexity with both humour and a hint of vulnerability. He's not just the larger-than-life character you might expect; there's a human side to him that makes his emotional journey relatable.

Kanav, played by Aman Bajpai, adds a refreshing comic energy to the stage. His character starts out trying to navigate the awkwardness of having his father-in-law around, and his reactions provide much of the laughter throughout the play. But

what stands out is how the character develops, revealing deeper layers of insecurity and emotional turmoil as the story progresses. Then there's Avni, a fan of Animesh played by Megha Mathur. She brings a surprising element to the play, stirring emotions and creating a sense of jealousy and tension, especially between her and Diya, played by Anumeha Jain. Their interactions bring a mix of comedy and conflict, creating a dynamic that keeps the audience engaged. Under the direction of Atul Satya Koushik, *Dad's*

Girlfriend strikes a balance between humour and emotional depth. The play effectively captures the complexities of family relationships, the generational gaps that often create misunderstandings, and the awkward yet beautiful ways love can play out in the midst of it all. It's not a light-hearted farce; instead, it offers a deeper reflection on how we navigate family bonds, often balancing humour and pain. What I found most striking about the performance was how humour blended with

moments of genuine emotional depth. The comedy is sharp, but it's the emotional weight of the story that stays with you. It's a reminder that, despite the challenges and complexities of relationships, the desire to reconnect and understand each other remains at the heart of family dynamics. The actors, especially Lodha, deliver performances that are both engaging and thought-provoking, making *Dad's Girlfriend* a memorable experience for anyone who's ever tried to bridge the gap between love, laughter, and the misunderstandings that come with it.

As the curtain fell and the audience slowly made their way out, there was one thing on everyone's mind, *Dad's Girlfriend* is a reminder that life, like theatre, is full of unexpected twists, laughs and those cringe-worthy moments that we can't help but love. After all, if you can survive family drama, flirtations and a father-in-law with a slightly over-the-top personality, you can survive anything! Just like the play, sometimes the best moments come when you least expect them and in this case, it was a delightful mix of humour, heart and a little bit of chaos. It left me thinking, maybe we should all take a page from Animesh's book and learn to laugh at the absurdity of life.

PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

Play: *Dad's Girlfriend*
Director: Atul Satya Koushik
Lead Actor: Shailesh Lodha
Cast Members: Anumeha Jain, Megha Mathur and Aman Bajpai



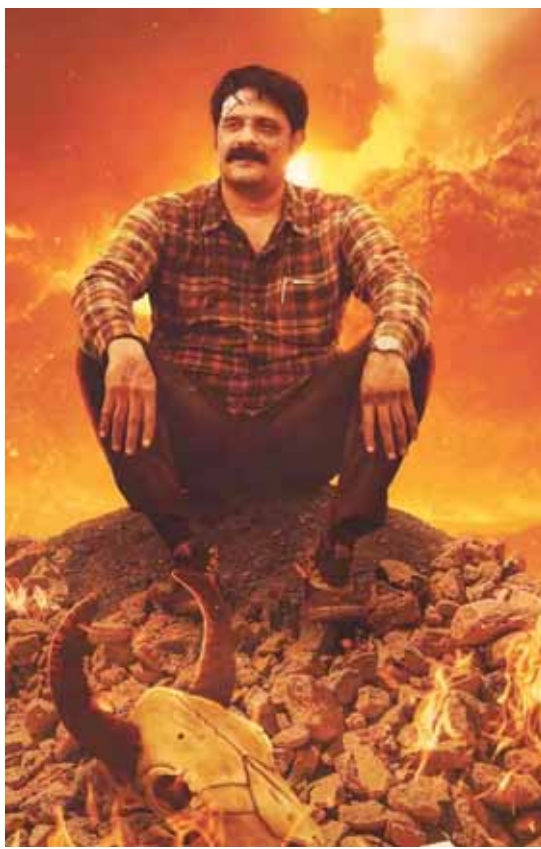
QUIETER BUT IMPACTFUL SEASON

Jaideep Ahlawat returns to the world of *Paatal Lok* in a more sombre way, yet the season remains compelling, says **ABHI SINGHAL**



Taking away all the popularity even in the pandemic era, *Paatal Lok* has shined with its first season making the audience giving a reaction of great, awesome and what not. The second season of Sudip Sharma's *Paatal Lok*, a multi-layered crime drama that builds upon its predecessor is back. This season takes a more subdued and contemplative approach making its shape deeply into the human condition, the nature of violence, and the brittle links that bind individuals and communities together. All this is showcased in contrast to the first season's plot on caste, class, and corruption. Jonathan Thom, a well-known Nagaland leader, was shockingly assassinated in Delhi at the start of the story. His ruthless murder starts a series of events that jeopardise peace negotiations in Nagaland. Inspector Hathi Ram Chaudhary, played expertly by Jaideep Ahlawat, is drawn into a web of political plots and personal grudges as a result of the crime. In order to track down a strange woman named Rose Lizo (Merenla Imsong), whose existence connects several story threads, Hathi Ram and his former coworker Ansari (Ishwak Singh) work to catch her. *Paatal Lok Season 2* chooses a slow-burning plot that puts character development and emotional resonance first, in contrast to the previous season's relentless pacing and incisive societal satire. In addition to examining issues of

trauma, sorrow, and the cyclical nature of violence, Sharma's writing digs deeply into the emotional lives of its protagonists. Hathi Ram Chaudhary remains the emotional core of the series. Jaideep Ahlawat delivers a powerhouse performance, portraying the world-weary inspector with the same grit and vulnerability that made him a standout in the first season. This time, Hathi Ram is not just chasing criminals but grappling with his own insecurities as a father and a man. His interactions with Ansari, now a successful IPS officer, form one of the show's most poignant arcs with themes of fellowship, professional jealousy, and unspoken respect. Additionally, Sharma defies the standard police procedural rules. The genre gives depth and dignity to side characters, who are sometimes reduced to mere story gadgets. Every subplot enhances the overall story, from Rose's heartbreaking search for comfort to Meghna Barua's played by Tillotama Shome, battle to be accepted as an Assamese woman in a system that is controlled by men. Director Avinash Arun's cinematography captures the duality of *Paatal Lok*: the grimy chaos of Delhi and the landscapes of Nagaland. The visuals serve as more than just backdrops; they echo the themes of division and alienation that permeate the story. The action sequences are tightly choreographed serving only justice to the



story rather than overshadowing it. The writing, too, deserves special mention for its ability to balance the personal and the political. While the first season was a hammer blow to societal structures, this season is more of a scalpel, dissecting issues like the migrant crisis, unemployment, and the fragile peace in conflict-ridden regions. Abhishek Banerjee, who played Hathoda Tyagi in a killer Season 1, has also written two episodes in the series. The cast shines across the board. Ahlawat is, as expected, a tour de force, but it's the supporting cast that truly elevates this season. Tillotama Shome delivers a nuanced performance as Meghna, a character who challenges both societal and viewer biases. Merenla Imsong's Rose is hauntingly tragic, while Nagesh Kukunoor's turn as a shadowy bureaucrat adds a layer of intrigue. *Paatal Lok Season 2* is a long-form narrative accomplishment. It may not have the same initial effect as the first season, but it makes up for it with a deeper, more complex examination of its subjects. Every character, no matter how small, feels real in Sudip Sharma's world, and every violent act has significance and repercussions. The series offers a moving reflection on the human cost of cruelty and the fading prospect of forgiveness, and it requires patient but rewards it abundantly.

RATING: 4/5

SUGGESTED BINGES



HISAAB BARABAR
IMDB Rating: 6.2/10
OTT: ZEE5
Director: Ashwini Dhir
Cast: R Madhavan, Neil Nitin Mukesh, Kirti Kulhari



THE NIGHT AGENT SEASON 2
IMDB Rating: 7.5/10
OTT: Netflix
Cast: Gabriel Basso, Luciane Buchanan, Fola Evans-Akingbola



PRIME TARGET
IMDB Rating: 6.7/10
OTT: Apple TV
Director: Brady Hood
Cast: Leo Woodall, Quintessa Swindell, Sidse Babbett Knudsen



SWEET DREAMS
OTT: Disney+ Hotstar
Director: Victor Mukherjee
Cast: Anil Parashar, Mithila Palkar



DIDI
IMDB Rating: 7.4/10
OTT: JioCinema
Director: Sean Wang



Australian Open: Keys upsets Sabalenka in women's final for first Grand Slam title



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Madison Keys of the United States upset two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 in the Australian Open final on Saturday night to collect her first Grand Slam title at age 29.

By adding this win over the No. 1-ranked Sabalenka to an elimination of No. 2 Iga Swiatek in the semifinals on Thursday — saving a match point along the way — Keys is the first woman since Serena Williams in 2005 to defeat both of the WTA's top two players at Melbourne Park. Keys, ranked 14th and seeded 19th, was playing in her second major final after being the runner-up at the 2017 U.S. Open. She prevented Sabalenka from earning what would have been her third women's trophy in a row at the Australian Open — something last accomplished by Martina Hingis from 1997-99 — and her fourth major title overall.

When it ended, Keys covered her face with her hands, then raised her arms. Soon, she was hugging her husband, Bjorn Fratangelo — who has been her coach since 2023 — and other members of her team, before sitting on her sideline bench and laughing. Sabalenka chucked her racket afterward, then covered her head with a white towel.

The men's final is Sunday,

with defending champion Jannik Sinner against Alexander Zverev. Sinner is seeded No. 1, Zverev No. 2. Sinner eliminated American Ben Shelton in the semifinals, while Zverev advanced when 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic stopped playing because of an injury.

Keys is the oldest woman to become a first-time major champion since Flavia Pennetta was 33 at the 2015 U.S. Open. This was the 46th Slam appearance for Keys, which ranks as the third-most major tournaments before winning a trophy in the Open era, behind only Pennetta's 49 and Marion Bartoli's 47 when she won Wimbledon in 2013.

It was the more accomplished Sabalenka who was shakier at the outset. Keys broke three times in the first set, helped in part by Sabalenka's four double-faults and 13 total unforced errors.

Don't for a moment think this was merely an instance of Sabalenka being her own undoing.

Keys certainly had a lot to do with the way things were going, too. She compiled an 11-4 edge in winners in that first set, managing to out-hit the big-hitting Sabalenka repeatedly from the baseline. For a stretch, it seemed as though every shot off the strings of Keys' racket — the one she switched to ahead of this season to protect her oft-

injured right shoulder and to make it easier to control her considerable power — was landing precisely where she wanted. Near a corner. On a line. Out of Sabalenka's reach. Also important was the way Keys, whose left thigh was taped for the match, covered every part of the court, racing

to get to balls and send them back over the net with intent. On one terrific defensive sequence, she sprinted for a forehand that drew a forehand into the net from Sabalenka, capping a break for a 4-1 lead. Never one to hide her emotions during a match, Sabalenka frequently

displayed frustration while trailing on the scoreboard, kicking a ball after netting a volley, dropping her racket after missing an overhead, slapping her leg after an errant forehand. Sabalenka took a trip to the locker room before the second set, and whether that

helped clear her head or slowed Keys' momentum — or both — the final's complexion soon changed. Keys' first-serve percentage dipped from 86% in the first set to 59% in the second. Sabalenka raised her winner total to 13 in the second set and began accumulating, and

converting, break points. When she sent a backhand down the line to force an error by Keys for a break and a 2-1 lead in the second, Sabalenka shook her left fist and gritted her teeth as she walked to the sideline. When she broke again to go up 4-1, Sabalenka marked the

occasion with a long and loud scream while looking in the direction of her team. By the time the last set arrived, the action was tight and tense, without so much as a single break point until its final game, when Keys came through with one last forehand winner.

26th January 2025

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Gukesh holds Abdusattorov; Praggnanandhaa stays in lead

PTI ■ WIJK AAN ZEE

World champion D Gukesh played out a draw with overnight joint leader Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, while R Praggnanandhaa signed peace with defending champion Wei Yi of China in the sixth round of the Tata Steel chess tournament here.

With only decisive game in the 14-players round-robin tournament at the De Morian on Friday, Abdusattorov and Praggnanandhaa continued to share the lead on 4.5 points out of a possible six and Gukesh is right on the toes of the leaders with four points. Seven rounds are still left in the first major tournament of the year.

P Harikrishna, Alexey Sarana of Serbia and Vladimir Fedoseev of Slovenia share the fourth spot on 3.5 points each and are within the striking distance of the leaders.

Gukesh held his ground in a challenging endgame against Abdusattorov, escaping with a draw after 64 moves.

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"Everything you've ever wanted is on the other side of fear"

— GEORGE ADDAIR



Tihar is more than just a correctional facility, it is a microcosm of society, brimming with stories of resilience, redemption and raw humanity. Following the excerpt from the book *355 Days: Pursuit of Freedom*.

With *Black Warrant* topping Netflix charts as the No. 1 show, the enigmatic world of Tihar Jail has captured the public's attention once again.

As one of Asia's largest and most complex prison systems, Tihar holds within its walls stories of resilience, despair, redemption and raw humanity. This newfound interest highlights society's fascination with the lives hidden behind prison walls, narratives that often remain untold but carry immense significance.

Tihar Jail is more than just a prison – it is a world within a world, housing individuals from all walks of life. From petty criminals to high-profile offenders, from activists to political prisoners, it is a microcosm of society where identities collide and stories unfold. Beneath the label of "convict" or "undertrial" lies a human being, grappling with remorse, survival, and perhaps even hope. Both *Black Warrant* and *355 Days* aim to shed light on this humanity, challenging the stereotypes often associated with prison life.

While *Black Warrant* provides chilling insights into executions and the inner workings of the prison system as a first-hand account by the former *Tihar Superintendent* and *ex-Legal*



The Changing Perception of Prison Life

Advisor of Delhi Jails, Sunil Gupta, the novel *355 Days*, inspired by true events, delves into the emotional and psychological journeys of inmates. Together, these narratives as well as other stories inspired by true events compel us to confront questions about justice, survival, and the power of redemption.

355 Days, an Amazon bestseller, delves into the complexities of life within *Tihar Jail*. The novel, which features a quote from Sunil Gupta on the cover stating it offers "A writing about a sensitive subject. An emotional journey with in-depth research of Tihar life," reinforces its commitment to authenticity. The endorsement highlights the novel's connection to the realities of life within *Tihar Jail*, appealing to readers interested in stories inspired by true events. *355 Days* transcends the typical crime story, weaving together legal drama with profound exploration of the protagonist's inner journey. This unique blend positions the novel within the sphere of philosophical prison drama. *Tihar Jail*, in many ways, serves as a mirror to

larger socio-economic and judicial systems. It reveals the inequities that plague our society, the struggles and resilience of the marginalised. While the prison itself is often viewed as a place of punishment, it also serves as a crucible of transformation. Sunil Gupta's tenure as Superintendent of *Tihar Jail* was instrumental in bringing significant reforms, including the establishment of legal aid cells, the streamlining of jail procedures with the *Delhi Jail Manual*, and the introduction of yoga and meditation programs for inmates. The rehabilitation initiatives and the skill-building workshops offer inmates a chance to rediscover themselves and have been instrumental in improving the lives of those incarcerated. When asked about the recent success of *Black Warrant* on Netflix, he said, "I believe in the power of selfless acts! I firmly hold that when you work towards the betterment of others, the universe rewards you in abundance. God's blessings and gratitude from those you've helped are the greatest rewards. Keep spreading



I BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF SELFLESS ACTS! I FIRMLY HOLD THAT WHEN YOU WORK TOWARDS THE BETTERMENT OF OTHERS, THE UNIVERSE REWARDS YOU IN ABUNDANCE. GOD'S BLESSINGS AND GRATITUDE FROM THOSE YOU'VE HELPED ARE THE GREATEST REWARDS. KEEP SPREADING KINDNESS, AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE!



kindness, and making a difference!" Literature and media have the unique ability to humanise even the most vilified. By presenting detailed, empathetic narratives, they remind us that every prisoner has a story, a past and, perhaps, a chance at a better future. Stories like *Black Warrant* and *355 Days* do not shy away from the darkness but instead bring to light the glimmers of hope and humanity that exist even in the bleakest environments. Recent years have seen several films inspired by real-life incidents. Notably, *Shahid* (2012), a critically acclaimed biographical drama based on the life of human rights lawyer *Shahid Azmi*, garnered numerous awards for its portrayal of his fight for justice for the wrongfully accused. *Lucknow Central* (2017), exploring the realities of life within Indian prisons, received positive reviews and praise for *Farhan Akhtar's* performance. However, it was the 2018 biopic *Sanju* – depicting the life of *Sanjay Dutt*, that achieved blockbuster status, breaking several box office records. Through literature and media, we can begin to bridge the gap between perception and reality, inching closer to a more nuanced understanding of the world behind bars.

Title: 355 Days: Pursuit of Freedom
Author: Deeba Salim Irfan
Publisher: LIFI Publications Pvt. Ltd.
Language: English
Paperback: 239 pages



MISSION BAY HAS SOME AMAZING DISHES:

KIMCHI BRUSSELS SPROUTS: *Kimchi Brussels Sprouts* is a fusion dish that combines the earthy flavour of Brussels sprouts with the bold, spicy, and tangy notes of traditional Korean kimchi. The Brussels sprouts are usually roasted or sautéed, then tossed with kimchi, adding a satisfying crunch and depth to the dish.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH: *Butternut Squash* is a rich and creamy dish that highlights the natural sweetness and smooth texture of roasted butternut squash. It is served as a soup, puree, or roasted, offering a comforting and nutritious side or main.

THAI STYLE CORN SOUP: *Thai Style Corn Soup* is a vibrant, flavourful dish that blends sweet corn with the fragrant spices of Thai cuisine. It typically includes ingredients like coconut milk, lemongrass, ginger, and chili, creating a savoury-sweet soup with a perfect balance of heat and creaminess.

SHIMEJI MUSHROOMS FLATBREAD: *Shimeji Mushrooms Flatbread* is a savoury appetizer or main dish that features the delicate, nutty flavour of shimeji mushrooms. The mushrooms are sautéed and served on a crisp flatbread base, often garnished with herbs, cheese, and a drizzle of sauce for added flavour.

RICOTTA RAVIOLI: *Ricotta Ravioli* is a classic Italian dish featuring soft, pillowy pasta filled with creamy ricotta cheese. The ravioli can be served with a variety of sauces, from simple butter and sage to rich tomato-based sauces, highlighting the delicate filling.

APPLE BERRY CRUMBLE: *Apple Berry Crumble* is a comforting dessert that combines the sweetness of apples with the tartness of berries, all topped with a buttery, crumbly topping. Baked until golden and bubbling, it's often served warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

TOFFEE DATE CAKE: Yet another sinful delight, *Toffee Date Cake* is a rich, moist dessert made with dates and a toffee-flavored sauce, creating a dense, caramel-like sweetness. Often served warm with a drizzle of toffee sauce and a side of cream, it offers a decadent treat perfect for dessert lovers.

unpretentious yet sophisticated, making it a great place for both casual dining and special occasions. *Mission Bay* has rapidly become a sought-after destination for food lovers in Delhi, offering not just a meal but an experience. With its innovative concept, stylish design, and impeccable service, it offers a little taste of San Francisco without leaving the city. For anyone seeking a unique dining experience in Malviya Nagar, *Mission Bay* is a must-visit. Whether you're a local or just passing through, *Mission Bay* Restaurant is a gem that promises a truly memorable American dining experience with a touch of West Coast flair, all while providing the warmth and comfort that makes you feel right at home.

A TASTE OF SAN FRANCISCO

The *Mission Bay* Restaurant recently opened in Malviya Nagar Delhi. It has some great cuisine and authentic American wining and dining experience for the connoisseurs, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**



Ever imagined to have American experience in Delhi, authentic and cosy ambiance with a service with smile. A tall order really but that is exactly what *Mission Bay* is offering in South Delhi. *Mission Bay* Restaurant stands as a delightful oasis of flavour, design, and American hospitality. Inspired by the vibrant and eclectic spirit of San Francisco, this restaurant offers an immersive experience that takes you straight to the Bay Area, all while keeping you grounded in the comfort of cozy, inviting interiors. As you step into *Mission Bay*, you are immediately greeted by the distinctive atmosphere reminiscent of the Californian city. The restaurant's interior is thoughtfully designed to capture the essence of San Francisco, featuring chic industrial elements, vibrant murals, and elegant wooden accents. The open, airy spaces and warm lighting evoke the feeling of walking through a trendy Bay Area neighbourhood. With high ceilings, large windows, and a touch of vintage charm, *Mission Bay* provides an inviting environment that feels both contemporary and comfortable. The

design masterfully blends rustic and modern elements, allowing guests to feel like they are dining in the heart of San Francisco. *Mission Bay* is not just about the ambiance, it's about bringing a slice of American dining to the capital. The restaurant offers a curated menu inspired by the best of American cuisine, with everything from hearty burgers and fried chicken to succulent steaks and fresh seafood. Each dish is crafted with care, using the finest ingredients to bring out authentic American flavors. The American-inspired cuisine is rich in diversity, just like San Francisco itself, with touches of California's innovative food scene and classic diner favorites. What stands out at *Mission Bay* is its commitment to quality and innovation. From comfort food to indulgent desserts, the menu offers a variety of options that cater to every palate. Whether you're craving the comfort of a juicy burger or the richness of a gourmet salad, *Mission Bay* delivers with an authenticity that transports you straight to the West Coast. One of the restaurant's most commendable aspects is its exceptional



service. The staff at *Mission Bay* are attentive, friendly and dedicated to creating a welcoming atmosphere. Their knowledge of the menu is impeccable, and they take the time to ensure that every guest feels special. Whether it's a

casual lunch, an intimate dinner, or a celebratory meal, the team at *Mission Bay* ensures a personalised dining experience. Their commitment to excellence in service sets *Mission Bay* apart from other restaurants in the area.

Despite the bustling energy of Delhi, *Mission Bay* manages to create a cosy environment that feels intimate and relaxed. The restaurant is the perfect spot for a romantic date, a family gathering, or a meal with friends. The ambiance is



A CULINARY REVIVAL

By **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere Opens its Doors: In the vibrant heart of Delhi, *Le Meridien New Delhi* recently opened legendary *Le Belvedere* as *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*. This exciting culinary destination blends the iconic restaurant's storied past with an innovative, modern twist, promising to captivate diners with a unique fusion of tradition and creativity. For decades, *Le Belvedere* has been a symbol of sophistication and elegance, a cherished venue for diplomats and dignitaries who delighted in its signature *Szechuan Chinese cuisine* and refined ambiance. With the unveiling of *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*, the space embarks on a new chapter, fusing cherished memories with a fresh, dynamic vision for the future.



Tradition Meets Innovation: At *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*, the restaurant elevates Asia's rich street food culture, combining traditional flavours with contemporary flair. Far more than just a dining experience, it celebrates the artistry of cuisine, blending innovation with timeless tradition. With inspiration drawn from the bustling street markets of Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Singapore and China, the menu offers a harmonious balance of authenticity and modern creativity that will delight discerning food lovers.



The culinary philosophy at *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is rooted in honoring the bold flavours and techniques of Southeast Asia, while also adapting to the evolving tastes of today's global palate. Each dish tells its own story, inviting guests to explore the vibrant world of Asian cuisine through a lens of imaginative reinterpretation and impeccable craftsmanship.

A Journey Through Flavour: The menu at *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is a sensory journey that promises to captivate from the first bite. Guests can indulge in an array of dishes, from playful twists on classic favorites to bold new creations, each thoughtfully crafted to engage the senses and spark curiosity.

With a focus on diverse textures and punchy flavours, the restaurant invites diners to savor the spirit of discovery with every course.

Whether you're enjoying an intimate dinner or hosting a celebratory gathering, *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* offers a culinary adventure that is both exciting and accessible. The restaurant's ambiance, where tradition and modernity intertwine, enhances the experience, making each meal a memorable occasion.

An Invitation to Explore: *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is now open, ready to welcome guests to explore a world where history, culture and gastronomy come together. From its reimagined take on Southeast Asian street food to its dynamic blend of traditional flavors and contemporary techniques, this new dining destination at *Le Meridien New Delhi* promises to be a must-visit spot for food enthusiasts in the city.

To take you to the mouth watering taste of Kashmir, *Shangri-la Eros New Delhi* hosted a culinary journey with the *Chef pin pop-up* at Tamra. The pop up showcased the spicy flavours of Kashmir, expertly handpicked by *Chef Archana Dhawan*. Apart from the Kashmiri flavours, desserts took the show with the pastry *Chef Dakshata Agarwal*. Guests were treated to a symphony of Kashmiri delicacies, beginning with a selection of signature appetisers. *Chef Dhawan's* creations included the crispy *Nadur Monji*, a delightful fried snack made from lotus stems and gram flour. The delicate *Chaman Kanti* and aromatic *Nadur Aloo Adrek Mond* further tantalised the palate. For non-vegetarians, succulent *Chicken and Mutton Kanti* alongside the traditional *Talite Gaad* offered a taste of local specialties. The live theatrical kitchens added a touch of drama, where skilled chefs artfully prepared *Kabar Gah* and the classic *Kaladi Kulcha*, each dish carrying a unique story of Kashmir's rich culinary heritage.

The main course was a grand celebration of flavours, where traditional Kashmiri recipes were brought to life with timeless cooking techniques. Vegetarian delights included the famed *Dum Aloo*, aromatic *Chaman Tamatar*, and the distinctive *Chaman Roganjosh*, all complemented by the hearty *Haak and Kashmiri Bhaderwah Rajma*.

Non-vegetarians were equally indulged with the legendary *Mutton Roganjosh*,



FROM ROGAN JOSH TO KASHMIRI KAHWA

Tamra was brought alive with the aroma of Kashmir and the soul satisfying taste of the desserts, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

delicate *Yakhni*, and unique *Masch Aloo Bukhara*. Fish enthusiasts savored both *Tamatar* and *Nadur* preparations. Each dish was served with a selection of breads, including *Kashmiri Phulka*, accompanied by authentic *chutneys* – from the nutty *Walnut* to the tangy *Muli* and *Anardana Pudina* variations.

To complete the dining experience, guests were invited to savour the royal *Saffron Kheer* and enjoy a warming cup of *Kahwa*, Kashmir's beloved spiced tea. While *Chef Dhawan* delighted palates with her authentic Kashmiri creations, Pastry *Chef Dakshata Agarwal* added a touch of sweetness with her signature dessert collection. The sweet finale featured delicate *Chiffon Cakes* in two variations - a fresh *Strawberry Kiss* topped with *Chocolate Strawberry Panna Cotta* and the rich *Chocolate Kiss* adorned with *Dark Chocolate Cookie Soil*.

The indulgence continued with a velvety *Chocolate Mousse Caramel* embellished with dark chocolate elements, and the standout *Bailey's Chocolate Egg*, which guests could enjoy at their table or take home as a memorable treat. Each dessert showcased a perfect blend of classic techniques and contemporary presentation, offering a delightful conclusion to the culinary journey. The *Chef Pin pop-up* at *Shangri-la Eros New Delhi* provided a unique opportunity for guests to experience the essence of Kashmir through its flavourful cuisine and taste.



"I TRY TO LIVE WITH THE IDEA THAT KARMA IS A VERY REAL THING. SO I PUT OUT WHAT I WANT TO GET BACK"
— MEGAN FOX

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

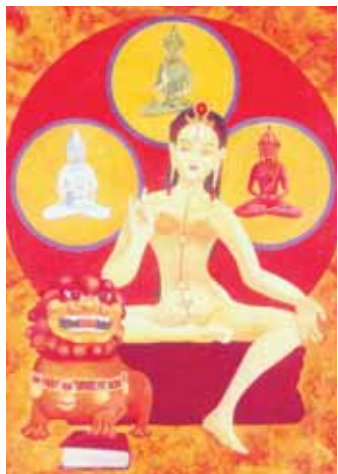
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week presents promising prospects for financial advancement. Prepare for travel, primarily for business or professional reasons. Despite potential disruptions to your plans, such as booking delays or temporary banking issues, your focus and determination will help you navigate through. The challenges may cause some frustration, but your ability to manage and control the situation will see you through. Opportunities will arise that could significantly boost your career. Additionally, romantic gestures, possibly even a significant proposal, may be on the horizon. Those feeling disheartened will find new energy, and married couples will experience a renewed sense of care and connection, enjoying a harmonious bond. However, be mindful of your expenditures towards the week's end, especially if considering special purchases or planning a scenic getaway.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Sunday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week promises an abundant experience for you, highlighted by prosperity not just in material terms but also in innovative ideas. You'll find yourself deeply engaged in family matters, playing a pivotal role in discussions that could shape future paths. Your efforts to spread joy won't go unnoticed, as familial support, particularly from close female relatives, will bolster your spirits and add to your emotional fulfillment. Your aspirations and desires are likely to manifest, making this a period to revel in your achievements and blessings. Financial gains might inspire plans for major projects, such as building a home or expanding entrepreneurial ventures. Opportunities for educational or professional advancement may also present themselves to younger family members, possibly including international prospects or significant job interviews.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Even when circumstances don't align with your preferences, remember, there's always a glimmer of hope. This week may bring feelings of rejection, sadness, or even betrayal. Though these experiences are tough, they serve as essential challenges. Without such tests, life would lack depth and opportunities for growth. These difficulties are chances to learn from errors and become resilient. By mid-week, you might find yourself reflecting deeply, striving to transcend your immediate desires and emotions, recognizing that they no longer serve your path forward. This period of solitude is a crucial step toward inner peace, distancing yourself from external chaos. Embrace your innate strength to overcome adversity. You may find that emerging from such trials, your capacity to love is not just restored but enhanced, ready to welcome brighter days hidden just beyond the current cloud cover.

Lucky number 28 | Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Thursday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, you may find yourself enveloped in a whirlwind of social engagements as you play host to guests, drawing you into a flurry of activities centered around hospitality. Your family and friends will seek your company, filling your days with interaction and liveliness. Embrace the surge of creative energy that accompanies these encounters, finding joy in the moments spent reconnecting with those close to your heart, including a possible reunion with a cherished acquaintance from your past. You'll receive ample support and affection from elder family members, enhancing your sense of satisfaction and well-being mid-week. At home, tranquility reigns; your family thrives, your health remains robust, and your financial situation shows improvement. However, as the week draws to a close, stay vigilant. Tensions could surface, potentially straining a close relationship and impacting your well-being.

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour Maroon
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week, you are primed to harness your innate resilience. With a clear vision of your objectives, your determination is set to guide you to success. Known for adept communication, this skill will particularly shine, aiding you in leveraging contacts and creativity to ascend to notable positions. This reinforced strength fosters a sense of security and vigor, contributing to significant financial gains, especially for those in business. Timely financial returns are anticipated, enhancing stability. Relationships, be it business alliances or personal bonds, will experience harmony, with supportive gestures from family enhancing your journey. While destiny smiles upon you, patience remains a virtue, especially in romantic engagements. Self-reflection is beneficial; however, embrace openness to new experiences, adopting a mature approach to evolving circumstances.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Gray
Lucky day Monday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

It's essential for you to embrace a phase of rest and rejuvenation. Revel in the serenity and vitality you discover during this period. Some may also find themselves recovering from physical or emotional strains. Be prepared for moments that illuminate answers and reveal deeper truths. Stay observant of your environment, as resolving these situations might not be straightforward and could initially lead to confusion or a standstill. Nonetheless, as the week progresses, expect a shift towards positivity. You'll be poised to embark on a new endeavor that demands swift action and daring. This is your moment to pursue success with the talents and enthusiasm you possess. Signs of new beginnings, possibly marking a personal expansion or a joyful addition to your family, are on the horizon. Embrace this vibrant energy, capitalizing on every opportunity it brings.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Saturday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

The coming period marks a significant shift for those born under the sign of the twins, heralding a phase of professional advancement and personal accolades. Your objectives are well-defined, propelling you towards your goals with remarkable clarity and determination. This is a time when your efforts are likely to bear fruit, offering tangible rewards for your dedication. Midweek brings a surge of vitality and creativity, enhancing your generosity and compassion. You'll find great joy in altruistic endeavors, even as you enjoy an increase in material comfort. Despite this, you'll find yourself drawn to deeper spiritual exploration. Family support, particularly from siblings and mentors, will bolster your journey. For entrepreneurs, improved rapport with business partners is anticipated, while those in organizational roles can expect opportunities for promotion or desirable relocations.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week marks a significant phase in your life where overcoming challenges could lead to positive changes. A potential rupture in close bonds may cause emotional distress, yet facing these adversities head-on will only fortify your resilience. Embrace the opportunities that arise; let go of doubts and take bold steps toward your aspirations. Remember, true bravery stems from confronting and leveraging your fears. If you find yourself questioning your achievements or feeling unfulfilled by the outcomes, consider reevaluating your strategies and exploring new avenues. This could set you on a more promising path, possibly culminating in advantageous financial prospects as the week concludes. Seize this time to advance confidently towards your goals, ensuring no obstacle remains insurmountable.

Lucky number 21 | Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Embrace the inner light that you've previously overlooked. Trust in your abilities and the existence of a higher power. When you believe something is possible, you're already halfway there. You are discovering an internal strength and inspiration. This sensitivity makes you open to the world, yet it is in this openness that you find resilience. You're now free to explore spiritual depths in new ways. Let go of past perceptions and welcome a fresh perspective. This time marks a powerful presence of your inner guidance, allowing your deepest aspirations a chance to surface and flourish. New connections are forming, brimming with possibilities that could lead to genuine affection and joy. Open your heart to let love emanate freely. Relish in this period of emotional depth and spiritual contentment.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Emerald
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week, you may find yourself wrestling with internal conflicts that disrupt your sleep and peace of mind. Concerns about family, especially the well-being and future of your children, might weigh heavily on you, causing stress about their education and long-term prospects. You might also face delays in getting the results or answers you seek. Health concerns within your family, particularly involving a close female relative, could demand your attention and care, adding to your emotional load. For those experiencing heightened emotional sensitivity, this period could bring challenges related to emotional well-being, including hormonal shifts. Engaging in yoga or meditation could prove beneficial, helping to stabilize your mood and strengthen your mental resilience. As the week closes, you'll likely find yourself transitioning into a new chapter, ready to make significant.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Ocean Blue
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week centers on aligning your intentions with your actions, ensuring a strong foundation rooted in self-awareness. As you engage with your innermost aspirations and fears, you discover a unique way to embrace and transform them, which strengthens your resolve. This inner clarity boosts your confidence in your abilities, enhancing your capability to achieve the outcomes you desire. You effectively merge theory with practice, and logic with emotion, showcasing a harmonious balance between thought and action. Your objectives are distinct, reminding you that mere wishing changes nothing; decisive action reshapes everything. The urge to create is hollow without the skill to execute. Therefore, embrace your ambitions wholeheartedly, set your intentions, and observe as your efforts orchestrate a symphony of success. You have the power to sculpt your life exactly as you envision it.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Mint
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Often, in the pursuit of our desires, we may overlook the abundant blessings already present in our lives. It's easy to miss the profound love surrounding us when we're caught up in the chase for more. Yet, this oversight can lead to missed opportunities and the potential slipping away of what we cherish most. Disappointment often arises not from a lack of possessions or achievements, but from failing to appreciate and be grateful for what we have. Taking time to acknowledge and give thanks for these blessings can be profoundly transformative. This week, anticipate significant shifts that may disrupt established routines or expectations. The nature of these changes will largely depend on your understanding of destiny and your readiness for transition. Embrace the possibility of new connections that may emerge, whether in the form of friendships, relationships, or partnerships.

Lucky number 25 | Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Friday

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Soul Connections — Karmic Ties

THE LIFE GUIDANCE



Seerat Kaur Marwaha

Karmic ties tend to mirror unresolved issues, such as fear of abandonment or low self-worth

Some relationships feel like a gentle breeze, soothing and effortless, while others ignite storms that shake us to our core. In life, we encounter people who awaken our deepest joys and others who surface unresolved pain. These connections, seemingly fated, carry a sense of purpose beyond the mundane. They bring lessons, healing, and sometimes chaos. The line between love and challenge blurs, leaving us to wonder why some bonds feel like a sanctuary, while others seem destined to test our limits. Understanding these relationships requires a closer look at the intricate dance of souls and the threads that bind them. At the heart of this mystery lies the concept of soul connections and karmic ties. While both feel deeply significant, their essence is starkly different. Soul connections are a meeting of kindred spirits, an undeniable resonance that feels like coming home. These relationships, romantic or platonic, carry a sense of ease and mutual growth. There is a quiet knowing, a recognition transcending time and space. It's as though the souls involved are dancing to the same rhythm, supporting one another in becoming their best selves. The

love shared in such relationships is often unconditional, fostering harmony and uplifting both individuals. Karmic ties, on the other hand, are far from serene. Rooted in the spiritual concept of karma, these relationships arise from unresolved energies or past-life debts. They feel magnetic, intense, and at times suffocating. Unlike soul connections, which nurture peace, karmic ties are turbulent, marked by repetitive patterns and emotional upheavals. They challenge us, forcing confrontation with our deepest wounds and shadows. It is as if the universe orchestrates these encounters to ensure we address the unfinished business of our souls. Psychologically, these two types of relationships function differently. Soul connections align with what Carl Rogers referred to as unconditional positive regard, a state of mutual understanding and acceptance. These bonds thrive on vulnerability and trust, creating a safe space for authenticity. Dr. Arthur Aron's research on intimacy underscores this, showing that genuine closeness arises when individuals feel seen and valued without judgment. Soul connections provide this sanctuary,



allowing both individuals to grow together without the strain of unhealed trauma. In contrast, karmic ties often reflect unresolved attachment wounds. Studies on attachment theory by Mary Ainsworth and John Bowlby show how early experiences shape relational patterns. Karmic ties tend to mirror unresolved issues, such as fear of abandonment or low self-worth. These intense relationships can feel overwhelming but serve a purpose. Acting as mirrors, they reflect insecurities, inviting healing. Their emotional chaos is not punishment but guidance toward self-awareness and transformation. Energy dynamics further differentiate these relationships. Soul connections are energising,

akin to basking in sunlight that is warm and nurturing. Karmic ties, however, often feel draining, like an unrelenting storm. This imbalance arises because karmic relationships are designed to break us open, forcing us to confront lessons we've avoided. Once these lessons are learned, the tie often dissolves, leaving us wiser and stronger. Healing from both types of relationships requires nuanced approaches. In soul connections, nurturing the bond is key. Gratitude journaling and mindfulness meditation strengthen harmony and foster growth. Positive psychology research shows expressing gratitude enhances relationship satisfaction and resilience, preserving the sanctity of such connections.

Healing karmic ties is more arduous. The first step is recognising patterns and understanding embedded lessons. This requires introspection and self-awareness. Energy healing techniques like chakra balancing and Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT) can release stuck emotions. Studies by Dr. Dawson Church highlight EFT's effectiveness in reducing stress and fostering clarity. Karmic ties often involve sacred and heart chakra imbalances, which meditations and affirmations can address. Boundary-setting is crucial in healing karmic ties. Many struggle with over-giving or seeking validation. Prioritising self-worth and asserting needs can break cycles of dependency. Though challenging, this process is liberating, transforming relationships into growth opportunities rather than sources of pain. Spiritual and psychological dimensions of these relationships intertwine deeply. Spiritual teachings describe relationships as mirrors, reflecting unhealed wounds or highest potential. Carl Jung's concept of the shadow self explains how unresolved aspects of our psyche manifest externally

until integrated. Soul connections reveal our potential, while karmic ties confront the shadows we avoid. Scientific studies support relationships' transformative power. Research on neuroplasticity shows challenging relationships can rewire our brains, fostering growth and resilience. Whether harmonious soul connections or turbulent karmic ties, both serve purposes in spiritual evolution. The distinction between these relationships is more than theoretical. It's a guide for navigating love's complexities. Soul connections reveal unconditional love's beauty and growth potential, while karmic ties demand healing and transformation. Both offer unique lessons for self-discovery. Ultimately, these relationships guide us toward self-realisation. Whether soothing the soul or testing its limits, each bond deepens our understanding of ourselves. As Rumi said, "The wound is the place where the Light enters you." Through the intricate dance of soul connections and karmic ties, every wound and moment of love brings us closer to the light within. — She is a Life Coach and Founder of Soulful Wellness

Now you can write to us at agendapioneer@dailypioneer.com