

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

T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

n 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 deported 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



Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman Tahawwur Rana. The US Supreme Court has cleared Mumbai attack convict Rana's extradition to India. dismissing his review petition against the move

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.

Welcoming the impending extradition to India, senior advocate Ujjwal Nikam, who was the Special Public Prosecutor in the 26/11 attacks case, said: "This is major success for India because the Supreme Court of America has dismissed the review petition of Tahawwur Rana. Tahawwur Rana and David Headley are the close links behind the terror attack of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. By extraditing Tahawwur Rana, India will get more information and evidence of the involvement of some of the Pakistani people, including the Pakistan security apparatus. I am very optimistic that the extradition of Tahawwur Rana will give more evidence about the involvement of some of the security apparatus of Pakistan,"

Rana is a close aide of the Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, who was also wanted by India for the 26/11 hit, carried out by 10 heavily armed Pakistan terrorists.

In an amended criminal complaint in the Illinois court against Headley and his accomplice Tahawwur Hussain Rana, on October 21, 2009, the FBI had given details about the reconnaissance done by Headley in India and his links with Rahul Bhatt, whom he (Headley) had befriended during his trips to India. Bhatt and his fitness instructor friend Vilas Pandurang Varak had subsequently confirmed having

met Headley during his visits to India It may be recalled that on September 26, 2023, the Mumbai crime branch sleuths had filed a 405-page supplementary charge-sheet against Canadian businessman of Pakistani origin Dr. Tahawwur Hussain Rana based on fresh evidence against him.

Among other things, the supplementary charge-sheet had alleged that Rana had stayed in India for 11 days - from November 11, 2008 to November 22, 2008. Of these days, he spent two days in Mumbai, where he stayed at Hotel Renaissance at Powai.

In its charge-sheet submitted before the trial court, the crime branch police had added Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) section 39A (offence relating to support given to a terrorist organisation) against Rana in the case."We have gathered some fresh evidence against Rana in the form of statements and documents," a senior crime branch officer said.

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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 wideranging 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

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 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 Surva Prakash who served as Chairman of Prasar Bharti Udhas were also conferred the



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

prestigious Padma Bhushan. Sadhvi Ritambhara, the firebrand leader of the Ayodhya Ram Temple movement, Hockey goal keeper PR Sreejesh, filim director Shekhar Kapoor and veteran journalist Rambahadur Rai, actress Shobana were also given Padma Bhushan.

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President Murmu bats **ONOE** PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday advocated for the "One Nation One Election" initiative, asserting it has the potential to redefine "good

governance" in the country by promoting consistency in governance, preventing policy paralysis, mitigating resource diversion, and alleviating financial burdens on the state.

In her address to the nation ahead of the 76th Republic Day, she emphasised the government's ongoing efforts to "eliminate remnants of a colonial mindset that have lingered in the country for decades" and cited the replacement of the British-era criminal laws with three new modern laws.

"We have been witnessing concerted efforts to change that mindset... Reforms of such magnitude require an audacity of vision," she said.

Highlighting the significance of the proposed bill aimed at synchronising



election schedules across the country, Murmu noted, "The 'One Nation One Election' plan can offer numerous benefits, including enhanced governance and reduced financial strain."

In discussing legal reforms, she pointed out the need to replace the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Indian Evidence Act with new

laws reflective of Indian traditions. She mentioned the introduction of the Bharativa Nvava Sanhita, the Bharativa Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, which prioritise the delivery of justice over mere punishment and place a strong emphasis on addressing crimes against women and children.

Reflecting on the significance of the Constitution, the President highlighted the progress achieved over the past 75 years.

"At the time of Independence, many parts of the country faced extreme poverty and hunger. However, we maintained a belief in ourselves and created conditions for growth," she said. Noting the contributions of farmers and labourers, she said India's economy now plays a pivotal role in global economic trends, asserting that this transformation is rooted in the framework established by the Constitution.

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Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday came





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.

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HOLIDAY NOTICE

The Offices of The Pioneer will remain closed on Sunday, January 26, 2025 on account of **Republic Day.** The next issue of the newspaper will appear on January 28, 2025.

bearing nine poll-promises for the people of the national Capital by releasing the third and the final part of Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) 'Sankalp Patra' including development

of Yamuna river front, ownership rights for residents of unauthorised colonies, 50,000 government jobs, metro and bus rides available throughout the day and Rs 10 Lakh life Insurance for gig workers for the upcoming Delhi assembly elections.

Addressing a press conference, the senior BJP leader also to clean the Yamuna River and take a holy dip in it. "If launched an all out attack on AAP chief and

in the Yamuna, he should at least go to the Kumbh and Chief former Arvind Minister Kejriwal, asking Kejriwai, him to take a dip in Mahakumbh in Uttar Pradesh to the out his sins the wash away his sins. And he can come after three years and take a dip in the Yamuna river, with his family, that biggest liar he has ever we will get cleaned ," Shah remarked. He also said seen in his political career. Releasing the manifesto titled Viksit Delhi Sankalp Patra that while Kejriwal makes fake promises, Modi government 2025', Shah mocked the ruling delivers

Union Home Minister Amit Shah along with Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva, Delhi BJP incharge Baijayant Panda and others releases third part of BJP's manifesto for the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, in New Delhi Photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

party's seven-year-old promise Announcing the poll promises made in the third part of the manifesto, Amit Shah said, Kejriwal cannot take a dip "Modi ji has announced the granting of ownership rights to more than unauthorized co 1,700 colonies. Previously, these colonies did not have permission for construction, buying, or selling. Now, by granting them full ownership rights and aligning with the Ministry of Housing's regulations and Delhi's by-laws, we will give them the right to construct and sell."

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Modi, Rahul features in AAP list of corrupt leaders RAJESH KUMAR IN NEW DELHI

Days after former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that he would not respond to Rahul Gandhi's attack on him, the Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday released a poster putting Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's name among a list of 11 "corrupt" people and claiming that the former Delhi Chief Minister will take on them. For the first time, Congress Leaders Rahul Gandhi, Ajay Maken and Sandeep Dikshit were featured prominently in the Arvind Kejriwal-led party's campaign poster.

Besides Rahul, the poster also has images of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Uttar Pradesh Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP leaders Virendra Sachdeva, Anurag Thakur, Parvesh Verma, Vijender Gupta and Ramesh Bidhuri and Congress Ajay Maken and Sandeep Dikshit. The poster Sandeep Dissum. with an image of security personnel making way for Kejriwal and his wife Sunita tagline, "Kejriwal's corrupt.



The poster referred to Kejriwal as being "honest". "Kejriwal ki imandari sare beyimano par padegi bhari [Kejriwal's honesty will prevail over all the dishonest people]," reads the poster.However, the inclusion of Rahul Gandhi signalled that the gloves are off for AAP. The AAP and Congress

are part of opposition bloc 'INDIA', however, are not fighting the Delhi election together.

While Congress leaders have attacked Keiriwal on the corruption front, Rahul has not referred to graft allegations against AAP though he had likened Kejriwal to Modi on "propaganda and false promises". Rahul had targeted Kejriwal on the issue of development over his governance track record, claiming that he cannot match the achievements of former Delhi Chief Minister and Congress leader Sheila Dikshit.

Meanwhile Mahila Congress president Alka Lamba, who is contesting against Atishi from Kalkaji assembly seat hit out at Keiriwal after AAP in its poster labelled Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sandeep Dikshit and Ajay Maken as "dishonest" "You (Arvind Kejriwal) insulted Sheila Dikshit and Manmohan Singh. Now, he says in the interview that Manmohan Singh was the most honest Prime Minister. He should apologise to Dr Singh's wife. You were begging Congress for an alliance. We made a huge mistake by allying with you on seven seats and supporting you during the Lok Sabha elections," Lamba said.

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CELEBRATING THE CULTURES, PEOPLE AND TRADITIONS THAT COME TOGETHER TO FORM THIS REPUBLIC



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city 02

Sanatan dharma essence of humanity: Yogi 'Sringeri Peetham's arrival has

PNS MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath described the Maha Kumbh as the biggest event in the world that symbolises unity.

He emphasised the significance of Sanatan dharma, likening it to a banyan tree. "Sanatan dharma is like a vast and majestic banyan tree. It should never be compared to mere shrubs or bushes," he stated.

During his visit to Prayagraj on Saturday, the chief minister attended an event organised by the All-India Avadhoot Bhesh Barah Panth-Yogi Mahasabha. Addressing the event he said, "While the world may have different sects and forms of worship, there is only one true religion - Sanatan dharma which is the essence of humanity. In India, all forms of worship, though linked to various sects and traditions, are deeply root-ed in Sanatan dharma, sharing

a common goal." Referring to the ongoing Maha Kumbh, Chief Minister Yogi said, "This sacred event is an opportunity to deliver a unified message to the world. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi often says, the message of Maha Kumbh is that unity ensures the nation remains unbroken." He further highlighted the importance of national security, saying, "If India is safe, we are all safe. If India faces a crisis, it will impact Sanatan dharma, and no sect or tradition within the country will feel secure. To prevent such a

situation, spreading the mes-sage of unity is essential." In his address, the chief min-ister expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the Maha Kumbh celebrations. He praised the immense devotion shown by crores of devo-



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with Juna Akhara's Swami Avdheshanand Giri at the Guru Gorakhnath Akhara PTI during Maha Kumbh, in Prayagraj on Saturday

tees who took a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati rivers during the auspicious days of Paush Purnima and Makar Sankranti. He noted that the positive comments from these devotees have opened the eyes of the world. The chief minister also echoed

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, saying, "This is India's century. For India to reach new heights in every field, representatives from all sectors must fulfill their duties with honesty and dedication. While politicians serve in their realm, the army secures the borders, and our revered saints

contribute to the religious world." Yogi highlighted that Sanatan dharma spread across the world not through force, but through goodwill and positive actions. He pointed out that in South East Asia, wherever South East Asia, wherever Sanatan dharma reached, it attracted people through its values and ideals, and many nations proudly embraced the

traditions of Lord Ram, Lord Krishna and Lord Buddha. He mentioned that in every corner of the world, India's influence can be seen in some form. "We have emerged from an era of darkness and are now moving forward," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi spoke with great pride about the ongoing Maha Kumbh, describing it as an event that is being celebrated with immense devotion. He stated that crores of devotees have gathered at the Triveni Sangam, with two crore people present at the event as of Saturday. "The roads are com-pletely blocked, and this will continue. In the last 10 days, more than 10 crore devotees have taken the holy dip in the sacred waters of the Triveni Sangam, and in the next 35 days, the number is expected to reach 45 crore," he said.

He highlighted the extraordi-nary scale of the event, stating

that no other country in the world can invite 45 crore peo-ple to an interim city and send out a message of unity. "The Maha Kumbh is a spiritual event that sends the mes-sage of unity, inviting people from all corner of the world. It's a place where no one has to go hungry. In any akhara or camp here, people will receive food, blessings and prasadam," he added.

he added. The chief minister empha-sised the power of Sanatan dharma, saying, "Here, no one asks about caste, sect or reli-gion. The only thing that matters is faith. People are not wor-ried about where to stay, where to sleep, or what to eat. They simply pick up their bags and journey here. This is the strength of Sanatan dharma and our revered saints." The chief minister acknowledged the positive atmosphere surrounding the Maha Kumbh but also warned of the chal-lenges that lie ahead. He emphasised the importance of maintaining unity within the country and society, urging everyone to resist attempts to

divide through language or other means. 'We must not let anyone's conspiracy disturb the unity of our society," he said and urged people to refrain from making people to retrain from making negative comments at any level. He emphasised that as society grows stronger, no power in the world will be able to challenge the unity and integrity of the nation. Chief Minister Vori also sticit

Chief Minister Yogi also visit-ed Shri Guru Goraksha Nath Akhara at the Maha Kumbh and performed a ceremonial worship of the Dharm Dhwaj. He also held discussions with the Siddha Yogeshwars from across the country, according to a state government's statement.

enhanced grandeur of Kumbh' PNS MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, during his visit to Prayagraj, met and honoured Shankaracharya Jagadguru Shri Shri Vidhushekhar Bharti Ji Maharaj of Sringeri Peetham, South India.

Expressing his joy, the chief minister said, "It is a matter of immense pride that the revered shankaracharya of Sringeri Peetham has graced Prayagraj with his presence. The Maha Kumbh feels complete with your arrival."

In a traditional southern wel-come, the chief minister was presented with a coconut, symbolising the Kumbh. In return, Chief Minister Yogi draped a shawl over the shankaracharya and offered him fruits as a gesture of respect.

The chief minister noted that Sringeri Peetham's formal par-ticipation in Maha Kumbh after a long gap has significant-ly enhanced its grandeur.

"Your five-day stay is a bless-ing for us. The state govern-ment and district adminis-tration are deeply grateful for your presence, which adds immense value to making the Maha Kumbh grand and divine," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi also briefed the shankaracharya about the strangements for Maha Kumbh, the participa-tion of saints, and the global attendance expected at this sacred event.

The shankaracharya commended the meticulous planning and excellent facilities and offered his blessings to everyone dedicated to making



the event a success

The shankaracharya also shared insights about the tradition of Dakshin Peetha, mentioning that 48 years ago, mentioning that 48 years ago, his guru's guru had visited to take a sacred dip during Amavasya in Kumbh. However, it was after 150 years that a shankaracharya from the South was formally participating in Maha Kumbh. He informed the chief minis-

ter that during his 5-day stay, he would engage in 'shas-trartha' (intellectual debate) and take a holy dip in Triveni and take a holy dip in Triveni Sangam on Amavasya along with other shankaracharyas. He also provided details of his stay and planned activities. In response, the chief minister invited the shankaracharya to hold a 'shastrartha sabha' and deliver a discourse during his

visit to Kashi. The shankaracharya graciously agreed to this and also con-sented to participate in a pro-

gramme at the Annapurna temple.

Earlier, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the ashram of Shri Kalyan Seva Ashram, Amarkantak, located in Sector 19, where he met Sadgurudev Baba Kalyan Das Ji Maharaj for a personal discussion. During the meeting, the chief minister shared insights about the arrangements and facilities provided by the government for Mahakumbh.

The discussion, which lasted about 10 minutes, highlighted the spiritual and administrative efforts undertaken to make the grand event successful. Kalyan Seva Ashram, situated in the sacred city of Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh, has been actively serving the public since 1977. With a focus on public service, social welfare, spirituality, and religious activities, the ashram continues to inspire devotion and community welfare.

Kumbh welcomes Ramnami sect devotees from Chhattisgarh **BY DIGHTS** PNS MAHAKUMBH NAGAR

The grand Maha Kumbh draws devotees, sages and followers of diverse sects and NOTICE traditions from across India. Among the crores who have arrived to take a holy dip in the sacred Sangam are devotees of

The date of birth in my passport has wrongly been mentioned as 01/07/1997. As per my educational certificates, Aadhaar Card, PAN Card and voter ID, it is 01/08/1984 which is correct. My correct date of birth 01/08/1984 be corrected in passport and reflected for all future purposes. Geeta Devi



poised to witness this grand occasion.

International visitors have expressed admiration for the expressed admiration for the event's scale and its signifi-cance. Many attribute its grandeur and global appeal to the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who has emerged as a key figure commanding the attention of powerful nations worldwide.

District Magistrate of Mahakumbh Nagar (Mela Officer), Vijay Kiran Anand, confirmed that diplomats from 73 countries will visit Maha Kumbh on February 1 to witness its spiritual significance. The Ministry of External Affairs has sent a letter to Uttar Pradesh's Chief Secretary regarding this visit. According to the letter, the diplomats are eager to visit iconic sites like Bade Hanuman Ji and Akshayavat in Mahakumbh Nagar. The diplomats from 73 countries will arrive at the Sangam Nose by boat and take a holy dip in the sacred confluence. Following this, they will visit the Akshayavat and Bade Hanuman Temple. They will then explore the depth of Mahakumbh through modern technology at the Digital Mahakumbh Experience Center. The diplomats will also participate in exhibitions and

MAHA KUMBH SNIPPETS

CULTURAL EXTRAVAGANZA TO MARK REPUBLIC DAY

Devotees and tourists visiting Maha Kumbh will witness a grand cultural extravaganza blending spirituality, patriotism and the essence of Indian heritage on the occasion of Republic Day on Sunday as part of the ongoing Sanskriti ka Mahakumbh event. Sanskriti Ka Mahakumbh was inaugurated on January 16.

The Culture Department has lined up vibrant performances across the Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati and Triveni pandals. The highlight of the day will be a performance by renowned Bollywood singer Sadhana Sargam at the Ganga Pandal, promising to captivate the audience with her melodious tunes. Devotees from across India and abroad will also have the opportunity to experience the rural culture of Uttar Pradesh through performances of Faruahi, Birha and Alha. Simultaneously, they can immerse themselves in the joy of Kuchipudi, violin recitals, classical singing, instrumental music and dance. The Culture Department has meticulously planned these events to

W/o Rajjan R/o Devi Nagar, Naraini, Tehsil Naraini, Distt. Banda.



1, Ram Dulari Bai Malviya mother of Mr Rajesh Kumar Malviya residing of House No D-1, Pooja Homes Colony, Post & Teh: Adhartal, Distt-Jabalpur,State-Madhya Pradesh, PIN-428004 have changed my Name from Ram Dulari Bai Malviya to Ramdulari Malviya vide Affidavit dated 24 Jan 2025 before L R Narayan(Advocate), Kanpur, UP.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that Saranaz M and saranaz Ali both the name are same person which is mine, But in future I shall we known as Saranaz Ali W/O Ali Kazim R/O, H.No.176, Rudahi, Bakshi ka Talab, Lucknow.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Ramesh Chandra Arora to Ramesh Arora. in future i shall be known as Ramesh Arora S/o Dwarika Nath Arora, Natraj Cinema 151 Red Building Govind Nagar, Kanpur.

NOTICE

Heena Fatima, wife of Shahid Akhtar Zaidi, resident of 450/114/4 Friends Colony Napier Road-2, Thana Thakurganj, Lucknow, hereby declare on oath that my name is mentioned as Heena Fatima on all my documents including school documents, whereas my name has been wrongly registered as Heena Shahid in the savings account of Pradhan Post Office Chowk. My real name is Heena Fatima, I should be known and identified by this name.

According to ancient tradi tions, Maha Kumbh serves as a spiritual convergence point for people of all castes, sects

the Ramnami sect from

With tattoos of 'Ram' covering

their entire bodies, dressed in

white garments and wearing

crowns made of peacock feathers, these followers sing devo-

tional hymns on the banks of

the Sangam, eager to immerse

themselves in this act of faith.

Chhattisgarh.

and beliefs associated with Sanatan dharma. The Ramnami sect, whose devotees hail from districts like Janjgir, Bhilai, Durg, Baloda Bazar and Sarangarh in Chhattisgarh, traces its origins back to the 19th century. This communi-ty emerged as a response to caste-based restrictions that barred certain tribal groups from entering temples and practising idol worship. In protest and devotion, these

boasts over 10 lakh followers, individuals began tattooing the predominantly based in name 'Ram' on their bodies, Chhattisgarh. Their presence at Maha Kumbh symbolises the turning themselves into living temples of the divine. The unity of diverse traditions withsect's founder, Parashuram of in the Sanatan dharma and

Devotees arrive to take a holy dip at Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj on Saturday

Janjgir-Champa, is credited with establishing this tradition. Ramnami followers refrain underscores the enduring spirit of devotion that transcends societal boundaries. from temple visits and idol

Kaushal Ramnami, a devotee worship, focusing instead on the worship of Nirguna Ram -the formless aspect of Lord from the Ramnami sect, shared that participating in the sacred dip at Maha Kumbh is a cher-Ram. They chant Ram's name ished tradition for their community. "On the auspicious and sing verses from the day of Mauni Amavasya, we Ramcharitmanas, embracing a deeply personal and inclusive will chant 'Ram naam' and take the holy dip at Sangam," he said. Kaushal, who hails from spirituality. Today, the Ramnami sect Sarangarh in Chhattisgarh, revealed that his ancestors have been attending Maha Kumbh for the past five generations. "This tradition will continue with our children in the future,"

he added. Approximately 200 Ramnami followers from Sarangarh, Bhilai, Baloda Bazar, and Janjgir have accompanied him this year, with more expected to arrive before Mauni Amavasya.

PTI

DIPLOMATS FROM 73 NATIONS TO TAKE HOLY DIP AT SANGAM

Diplomats from 73 countries set to in the Maha Kumbh and take a holy dip at the Sangam. Even envoys from Russia and Ukraine, historically at odds, will join this historic event. Diplomats from the United States and Bangladesh are also

make Republic Day celebrations truly unforgettable.

TWO CARS CATCH FIRE, NO CASUALTIES REPORTED

Two cars caught fire in Sector 2 of the Maha Kumbh Mela area on Saturday morning, but no casualties were reported, officials said. Chief Fire Officer (Maha Kumbh) Pramod Sharma said a car entering the mela area from Varanasi caught fire due to a short-circuit and another car adjacent to it also caught fire. Fire brigade personnel responded promptly, safely rescuing the occupants from the cars. No injuries were reported in the incident, he added. On January 19, around 18 camps were reduced to ashes when straw in one of the camps caught fire in Sector 19. However, the fire brigade personnel managed to control the fire and there was no loss of life.

A financial planning conclave, 'Samanvay', hosted by Surya Command, was held in Lucknow on Saturday, bringing togeth-

er military and civil officers from eight states to enhance defence

finance. The event aimed to promote collaboration and improve

operational readiness in defence spending. Key speakers, including SG Dastidar, Financial Advisor Defence Services, and

Lt Gen Ulhas Kirpekar, Director General of Financial Planning, discussed the complexities of defence finance, stressing the impor-

tance of synergy between military and civil institutions. Lt Gen

Anindya Sengupta, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of

Central Command, highlighted the need for optimal budget util-

isation to ensure the armed forces' preparedness for current and future challenges. Inaugurated by Chief of Staff, Central Command, Lt Gen Mukesh Chadha, the conclave set the stage

for productive discussions on financial planning within the

cultural tours, including visits to the UP State Pavilion, akharas, Yamuna Complex, Ashoka Pillar, and other significant sites. This visit will offer the diplomats a chance to experi-

CITYBRIEFS

FINANCIAL PLANNING CONCLAVE

ence India's culture, spirituality and secular traditions. It will serve as a global introduction to India's rich heritage, including yoga, meditation and spirituality.

BTech student injured in

knife attack Lucknow (PNS): A first-year

BTech student was allegedly attacked by unidentified accused with a knife in Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, on Saturday afternoon. The victim, Aman Dubey, has been admitted to RMI Hospital, where his condition is reportedly improving. Doctors said Aman sustained injuries to his hands, back, and stomach, and required stitching. DCP (East) Shashank Singh said that Aman and his friend were travelling towards Summit Building from Matiyari tri-section in

Chinhat when they had a dispute with the accused over allowing their vehicles to pass. The altercation escalated, and the assailants pulled out a knife, seriously injuring Aman. Police have formed three teams to track down the perpetrators. CCTV footage from the miscreants' escape route is being reviewed as part of the investigation. The incident has raised concerns over police vigilance, as authorities were only alerted after a video of the attack went viral on social media. Police have dismissed claims of any personal enmity between the victim

and the suspects.

FSDA team raids two shops

Lucknow (PNS): Food Safety and Drug Administration (FSDA) team raided two shops and seized adulterated sauces and noodles, a senior official

said on Saturday. Assistant Commissioner of Food Safety, Vijay Pratap Singh, said that based on a complaint, a raid was carried out at M/s Sahu Foods operating in the village of Baravan Kalan, Dubagga. "The inspection was conducted by the team from the Food Safety and Drug Administration. During the inspection, the owner of the establishment, Sanjay Sahu, was found manufacturing, storing, and selling different types of sauces and noodles. These food

items were found to be adulterated," he said.

He added that, based on suspi-cion of adulteration, a total of six samples, including conti-nental sauce, green chilli sauce, continental sauce (Fresco brand), noodles, soya sauce, and refined flour, were collected. "Green chilli sauce, continental sauce, and soya sauce, with a total quantity of approximately 3,700 kg, were seized on the spot. The wholesale market value of these items was Rs 60,000. Tomato purée and vine-gar worth Rs 11,000, which were found to be expired, were destroyed on the spot," Singh said.

Upon receiving information that another trader was buying from this establishment, the FSDA inspected Gaurav Traders, a shop located in analysis.

Aliganj, where continental sauce, chilli sauce, and soya sauce were found stored for sale. "On suspicion of adulteration, three samples of the food items were collected. The remaining continental sauce, chilli sauce, and soya sauce, totalling about 300 kg and having a wholesale market value of Rs 10,000, were seized on the spot. Both of the food establishments were found to be operating without a food licence. Therefore, the owners of both establishments were instructed to cease food business operations immediately," he added. A total of nine samples had been collected from the establishments mentioned above and sent to the laboratory for

7-yr-old boy stabbed to death by drug addict

Baghpat (PTI): A seven-year-old boy was stabbed to death with scissors by an alleged drug addict in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat district, police said on Saturday. The victim, Afzal had gone missing on Thursday morning. His body was recovered from a sugarcane field adjacent to a jungle in Adampur village, following the arrest of the accused neighbour, Shavez (19), officials said. Afzal was last seen with Shavez around 10 am on Thursday. When the victim did not return home, his mother started searching for him, and subsequently his family lodged a police

complaint on Friday, a police officer said. Station House Officer (SHO) Bachchu Singh said that the family alleged Shavez of abducting their child. The accused was taken into custody and during interrogation he confessed to killing the boy. The body was recovered from a sugarcane field and the scissors used in the crime were also recovered, the officer said.

According to the police, the accused is a drug addict. When asked about the motive for the murder, he reportedly said he killed the boy by stabbing him with scissors "just like that."

LSWA demands renewal of

EXCISE POLICY Lucknow (PNS): The liquor sellers of UP have demanded renewal of the excise policy, say-ing if it was not renewed, the families of the liquor sellers will starve. The liquor sellers from Lucknow, Kanpur, Barabanki, Varanasi, Lakhimpur Kheri, Ayodhya, Allahabad, Bareilly and other districts participated in a meeting held on Friday. It was called by Liquor Sellers Welfare Association (LSWA) and was chaired by association's president Sadar SP

Singh. All the representatives of liquor sellers and LSWA office-bearers demanded renewal of Excise Policy 2025-26. Sardar SP Singh and LSWA senior vice-president Neeraj Jaiswal said that more than one thousand liquor traders from different districts had been informing the chief minister, excise minister, principal secretary (excise) and excise commisence models and craft sioner through letters that 90 per work. The students explained their projects cent of the liquor shops had goods in excess of the quota/revto the visitors. enue prescribed by the department, while the quota/revenue for the months of February and March was vet to be lifted, hence the situation was very

serious.



STF INSPECTOR AWARDED

Inspector, STF, Arun Kumar Singh was conferred the Chief Minister's Gallantry Medal and DG Commendation Disc- Gold for his courageous act. He is one among those conferred the medal on the occasion of Republic Day.



military.

city 03

Maha Kumbh to contribute **10 pc to UP's GDP: CM**

<u>inday pioneer</u>

PNS LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that the ongoing Maha Kumbh is set to contribute 10 per cent to the state's gross domestic product (GDP).

LUCKNOW | SUNDAY | JANUARY 26, 2025

In an interview to a TV channel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the 45-day event was projected to draw a number of attendees equivalent to the world's third-biggest population. "Maha Kumbh has only one message

and you must be seeing it too. There is no difference of caste, creed, sect or gender. Everyone is able to take bath in the same confluence. No one knows who is taking bath next to them. The message of Maha Kumbh is the message of unity and integrity. If we take the message of unity and integrity. If we take the message of unity, then Sanatan dharma will be strong and if Sanatan is strong then the country will be strong," the chief minister stated.

Recently, the chief minister along with his cabinet took a dip in the Triveni Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh. Highlighting the significance of the ritual, chief minister described the Sangam bath as a pro-

found symbol of Indian culture and the Sanatan dharma, embodying spiritual peace, religious devotion, and social welfare. "Bathing in the sacred confluence is not just a personal act of purification but a collective call for the welfare of all," he said, according to an official statement. The chief minister also spoke about the youths who are coming to the Maha Kumbh in large numbers. "The previous governments had made it an event for the elderly. They did not provide facilities for it. For the first time we are seeing that cleanliness, security have been added as part of the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. If there is a confluence of modernity and spirituality, the

youth will join," he said. By 2029, Uttar Pradesh was set to achieve the milestone of a one trilliondollar economy, the chief minister said. "Despite the impact of COVID-19, we have managed to double the state's economy over the last 7-8 years and are on track to meet this target," he said. Chief Minister Yogi categorically ruled out any division of the state, reasserting his earlier stand attributing the state's tremendous potential to its

unity in the current form.

"UP is UP in itself. That is its potential. We should try to achieve our goals while keeping the state united. This is its strength, identity and pride," he said. In 2011, during the Mayawati-led Bahujan Samaj Party rule, the Uttar Pradesh assembly had passed a resolution for a four-way split of the state. The proposal was to divide Uttar Pradesh into Bundelkhand, Purvanchal, Awadh Pradesh and Paschim Pradesh.

Chief Minister Yogi has principally been opposed to the idea and claimed that the people of Uttar Pradesh are proud of their history and the state has its own importance in the country. "We believe in uniting, not dividing," he said earlier. The chief minister further pointed to the government's focus on all-round development of the state and said special attention has been given to the development of the state's eastern parts and the Bundelkhand region. He also referred to the Purvanchal expressway and Bundelkhand expressway, claiming that the two projects will become the backbones of development in these areas.

Govt's claim on eco unrealistic, says Akhilesh

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday said the Uttar Pradesh government was only capable of "a trillion lies" and its claim of making the state's economy reach the USD 1 trillion target in the next four years was "impos-sible". In a post on X, Yadav alleged the Bharatiya Janata Party government was plagued with corruption, and said there were no tangible investments that have left the farmers, traders, businessmen and industrialists struggling.

"BJP can only make a record of telling one trillion lies and nothing else," he said in a Hindi post.

"The BJP government in UP is again throwing around the slogan that UP's economy will reach USD 1 trillion in the reconting will reach OSD'r trimfor in the next four years. According to today's 'growth rate', this is impossible, that is why this is a 'mahajhooth' (big lie)," Yadav said. "If people do not have money, how will purchasing power come; if workers are migrating where will labour resources come from?" the SP president said. Yadav went on to highlight concerns regarding inflation, people's income, job creation for the youth, and the rising costs of medicine and education.

彩 RYAN

STF nabs murder accused absconding for 14 years

PNS LUCKNOW

The UP STF apprehended a murder accused who had been absconding for the last 14 years, a senior official said here. The accused, identified as Jawwad Jabbar Syed, was arrested near Indiranagar metro station while he was en route to Charbagh railway station. He was named in a murder case from 2011 that occurred in the Nalasopara Police Station area of Thane, Maharashtra.

A spokesman stated that the STF received a tip-off that the suspect was travelling in the city, prompting an operation to apprehend him. The accused, originally from Asiwan in Unnao district, had been residing in Nalasopara East, Thane.

Earlier, the crime branch of Maharashtra Police had sought the assistance of the UP STF for the arrest of Jabbar in connection with the murder case.

BEST

unintentionally killing their neighbour by beating him with Following this, the STF team carried out an intelligence-gathering operation.

a stick while under the influence Upon interrogation, the arrestof alcohol. ed accused revealed to the police that on May 24, 2011, he had The police said they recovered killed his maternal aunt, Rehana Khatoon, in the Sai Dwarika Chawl Police Station area of Nalasopara due to her illicit relations. Since then, he had been in hiding to avoid arrest. He had been working in zari (embroi-dery) while living in Nalasopara, where his maternal uncle's familv also resided. He originally hails from Unnao district. Meanwhile, three accused were

arrested on Friday night for bludgeoning their neighbour, Deshraj, to death in the Gosainganj Police Station area. According to an official communique, the trio were arrested for

the stick used in the incident, which took place in Malouli village in the area. On January 23, one Jagjivan from Malouli, Gosaingani, informed the police that his brother Deshraj had been beaten by Jitendra, Rajesh, and Kripashankar, who live in the same neighbourhood, in a drunken state. He said that after the matter was initially settled, Deshraj returned to his house. "After two hours, when Deshraj came out again, the accused beat him with a stick, which resulted in his death. The accused threw his body into a wheat field outside the village and fled," the deceased's brother alleged.



4 killed, 2 hurt BJP planning to create disturbance as car collides in Milkipur bypolls: SP president with truck

Lucknow (PNS): Four people were killed and two injured when a car collided with a truck in Shahjahanpur.

According to Superintendent of Police Rajesh S, the victims, of Gora and Dahena villages under Allahganj police sta-tion, were travelling in a car which collided head-on with a truck coming from the opposite direction near Kateli village around 11 pm on Friday.

"The deceased were identified as Rahul Kumar (25), Vinay Sharma (27), Akash (22) and Gopal (24). All of them were killed on the spot.

Police seized the truck but its driver remains at large and efforts are on to arrest him. In a separate incident, two women were killed and three people injured when a tractor collided with an autorickshaw in Agra, police said on Saturday.

The victims were returning from Bateshwar when the accident took place in the Pinhat police station area on Friday night.

Lucknow (PTI): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday claimed that like the previous by-elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party is planning to create distur-bances in the Milkipur bypolls by misusing

the administrative machinery. In the by-elections held in nine assembly constituencies in UP in November last year, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance candidates won seven seats, while the SP had managed to win only two seats.

Yadav was addressing a meeting of party workers at the Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Auditorium at Samajwadi Party's state headquarters in Lucknow on Saturday. Accusing the ruling BJP, he said, "Like the

previous bye-elections, the BJP is planning to create disturbances in the Milkipur election by misusing the administrative machinerv?

In a statement issued by the SP, Yadav said, From now on, threats are being given to village heads. Opposition workers are being intimidated. False cases are being filed against SP workers, so that they cannot campaign in favour of SP, but not even a single ploy of BJP will succeed."

However, in the February 5 Milkipur bypolls, the public has decided to trust the SP. Winning this by-election is also necessarv for democracy. The results of the Milkipur bye-election will have an impact

on the next assembly elections," the SP chief said. He added that the public has understood why the BJP never speaks the truth. Lies and loot are its only mission and it has no vision for development.

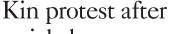
The former chief minister of UP also said, "By misusing power, the BJP gives false assurances and makes new excuses to defame the opposition. Now, the public has decided to give it a crushing defeat in the 2027 elections as well as in the Milkipur byeelection. Just as the BJP came to power in the state in 2017, it will be out of power in 2027." He said that despite the BJP's many conspiracies, the supreme power of the people cannot be denied. The SP is engaged in connecting everyone with the resolution of PDA (Backward, Dalit, Minority). Under this, everyone will have a stake in the success of social justice. The Samajwadi Party is committed to democracy, socialism and the Constitution. Ten candidates are in the fray in the February 5 bypoll for the Milkipur assembly seat in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya district. The main contest in the bypoll is expected to be between SP's Ajit Prasad and the BJP's Chandrabhanu Paswan. The SP would like to retain the seat, especially after delivering a blow to the BJP in the Faizabad parliamentary seat that houses Avodhya, the home of the newly consecrated Ram mandir.

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e-rickshaw driver's body found in river

Lucknow (PNS): A day after the body of e-rickshaw driver Himanshu was recovered from the Gomti river, his family's anger erupted on Saturday, leading to a protest. The family blocked the 1090 Crossing Road near Balu Adda, placing the body there. Samajwadi Party MLA Ravidas Mehrotra joined the protest, express-ing solidarity with the grieving family.

The protesters demanded the arrest of Himanshu's wife, Payal, and her lover, Ayush, accusing them of murder. After a brief discussion with police, the family agreed to proceed with the last rites. Mehrotra, who arrived after hearing about the disturbance, promised to ensure justice for the family and criticised the police for not acting sooner. He expressed regret that the police had failed to take timely action while the family had been searching for Himanshu for several days. The police assured the family that the suspects would be arrested soon. According to sources, Payal and Ayush have been taken into custody for questioning. Himanshu's sister, Rita Sonkar, alleged that while the family was desperately searching for Himanshu, Payal had been in frequent contact with Ayush, raising suspicions.

Rita called for the police to check their mobile records to uncover the truth and suggested that other individuals may also be involved in the crime.Himanshu, 27, a resident of Balu Adda, was found dead in the Gomti river near Hanumant Dham Gomti river near Hanumant Dham on Friday evening. The Wazirganj police recovered his body with the help of divers and sent it for post-mortem. In her preliminary question-ing, Payal stated that Himanshu had left the house on January 21 after receiving a phone call. She claimed the last GPS location showed his e-rick-shaw near Hanumant Dham Payal shaw near Hanumant Dham. Payal has accused an LMC employee from Kaiserbagh and his friends of killing Himanshu and throwing his body in the river.Himanshu and Payal had a love marriage in 2018, and it was later revealed that Payal and the LMC employee had previously planned to murder Himanshu. However, the plan was exposed, and Himanshu persuaded Payal to abandon it.





Greetings on the 76th Republic Day!

50 Golden Years of NTPC and Steps Towards a Green Future

By 2032, the company aims for 60 GW from RE sources, making up 45% of its total power capacity



50 Years of Power – Empowering Society and Building a Green Future

state 04

Democracy should be strengthened through voting: Haque



inday pioneer

Voter awareness rally being taken out in Varanasi on Saturday.

LUCKNOW | SUNDAY | JANUARY 26, 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

To mark National Voters' Day on Saturday, Principal Aarti Devi flagged off a voter awareness rally at the Chiraigaon block primary school to make the citizens aware of the importance of vot-ing and ensure 100 per cent voting in the upcoming elections. Children were carrying placards with slogans and were raising slogans. The principal said the contribution of every citizen is essential for strength-ening democracy. "Voting is not only our right, but it is also a means to give direction to our future," she said, explaining the process of becoming a voter, voter list and importance of voting. "Citizens who have completed 18 years can become voters by filling Form-6. The Shashikala, Pramila Singh, Jyoti

years of age should register their names in the voter list and vote 100 per cent to make the country stronger", she said. On the occasion, everyone took an oath to vote 100 percent. District vice-president of All Teacher's Employees Welfare Association (ATEWA) Dr Ehteshamul Haque said that democracy should be strengthened by exercising the right to vote noting that the world respects the democratic processes and systems of India. Voters have always chosen governments without any discrimination and fear. We all have to maintain this system together and strengthen democracy", he said. On the occasion, Rekha Upadhyay,

Kumari, Shakti Kumari, Reena, youth who have completed 18 Rita, Soni, Asha, Triloki Prasad Gupta, parents, students were

also present. Meanwhile, on National Voters Day, all the girls in the e-library run by the social organisation Asha Trust also took an oath for 100 per cent voting in all elections. They pledged to vote impartially, fearlessly and thoughtfully and to make every possible effort to strengthen democracy. Its coordinator Vallabhacharya Pandey, while underscoring the importance of democracy and voting, called it the key to the building and empowerment of the country. He said today is a day of pride and inspiration for all of us. National Voters' Day is the day to honour the strong pillar of the country's democracy and this occasion reminds

Students made aware of importance of voting PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

Aprogramme under the aegis of Rashtriya Sewa Yojana was organised on the 15th National Voters' Day at Handia PG College here. The event started with lighting of event started with lighting of ceremonial lamp and garland-ing of the idol of Maa Saraswati.Handia SDM and Joint Magistrate Anubhav Singh, who was the chief guest, was welcomed by Principal Dr Vivek Pandey. The SDM made the students aware of the importance of voting and administered the oath to them to vote. The programme was presided over by Principal Dr Vivek Pandey and conducted by Dr. Deepak Singh and Dr

us of our rights and responsibilities so that we can make the future of our country better. Describing the right to vote as the biggest power of democra-cy, he said the vote of every cit-izen is priceless. He said this day should not be limited to mere formality, rather it gives us an opportunity to think about how we can motivate more and more people to vote. Jyoti Singh administered the oath to all those present. NDRF'S SWIFT RESPONSE:

A team of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) dis-



occasion Handia naib tehsildar Anupam Tripathi, Dhanupur naib tehsildar Ashok Kumar Srivastava and Inter College Principal Ajay Mishra besides a large number of students were present. The main objective of the

programme was to make the new voters aware of this important democratic right.

played unparalleled promptness and humanitarian service at Dashaswamedh Ghat on Saturday when they assisted a 54-year-old woman from Pali, Rajasthan, who fell on the ghat while preparing to take a holy dip in the Ganga. The team immediately reached the spot and provided first aid to her, called an ambulance and safefly evacuated here to the nearest hospital. Their prompt action not only saved her life but also highlighted the commitment and efficiency of the NDRF.

Operation Control Centre at Prayagraj Jn inspected

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

Principal Executive Director (Traffic Transportation) Movement, Railway Board, Prabhas Dansana, conducted an inspection of the Operation Control Centre (OCC) at Prayagraj Junction on Saturday. During his visit, he commended the operations team for their dedicated efforts in ensuring the smooth and efficient management of train operations on the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC).

Dansana projected that by next financial year, 100 freight trains will be handed over to the Eastern Dedicated Freight Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC). Currently, an average of 73-75 trains operate daily on the EDFC from the East Central Railway (ECR) region towards Delhi in the UP direction. Prabhas Dansana outlined an ambitious vision to increase train operations to 100 trains in each direction-UP and DN-by the next financial vear. He emphasised the need to

identify and address constraints, if any, to ensure seamless integration and operation of these additional trains. He discussed the importance of increasing the speed of freight stocks running on the Dedicated Freight Corridor stakeholders and support the establishment of upcoming Corporation of India Limited



(DFCCIL) network in consultation with RDSO (Research Design and Standards Organisation). The goal is to achieve optimum utilisation of rolling stock and improve the overall efficiency of freight movement. He also explored the use of advanced automated speed detection technology to monitor and manage train speeds across the corridor. Dansana advised pursuing state authorities to resolve challenges related to approach

roads where hindrances are

ical to attract more logistics

affecting connectivity. Addressing these issues is critGati Shakti cargo terminals under DFCCIL. Dansana advised implementing the ABC analysis approach to classify issues and tasks based on their priority and impact on operations. This method will enable the team to focus on high-priority factors affecting train speeds and operations, ensuring targeted and efficient problem-solving.

Dansana emphasised the timely completion of running rooms within DFCCIL infrastructure. Running rooms are vital facilities that provide rest for train crews between duties, ensuring their well-being and readiness for safe and efficient train operations.

Various aspects of cyber security highlighted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Association Association Association Association and the security Awareness' was conducted at the Faculty of Commerce, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), under the auspices of the National Service Scheme (NSS). It was inaugurated by the chief guests inspector Rajeev Kumar Singh, sub-inspector Shyamlal Gupta, Prithvi Singh, Dina Yadav, Dr Mayank Pratap (Faculty of Law, BHU), Dr Anand Prakash Dube (School of Management Sciences, Varanasi) and Prof HK Singh (Dean, Faculty of Commerce, BHU).

The keynote speaker, Shyam Lal Gupta, cyber police expert, emphasised that this workshop would be highly beneficial for students in time combating cyber threats and highlighted various aspects of cyber security to the stu-ways to avoid cyber fraud

dents. Senior cyber expert Dr Anand Prakash Dube from would also be given detailed information on how to pre-vent others from falling victhe SMS also drew attention to different types of cyber tim to it. The speakers said cyber fraud has become a crimes. He discussed technical measures to combat cyber threats and focused on the major issue, with almost every importance of being vigilant second person being deceived while using banking and financial applications. Dr and cyber security education is the need of the hour and it Mayank Pratap specifically discussed cyber laws, safe is crucial to stop the rising incidents of cyber fraud. browsing practices, use of strong passwords, multi-tier login systems, and SSL proto-Hence, the workshop on cyber security awareness is being launched at the Faculty cols. Inspector Rajeev Kumar of Commerce. The event was Singh and Shyam Lal Gupta conducted by Dr Eshi Mohan, highlighted the utility of the with Dr Lal Babu Jaiswal workshop for students to proposing the vote of thanks. become cyber proficient. In his presidential address, Prof Inspector Dina Nath, cyber expert Prithvi Raj Singh, Prof Dhananjay Sahu, Prof Fate HK Singh motivated the stu-Bahadur Singh, Dr Meenakshi dents to come forward and adopt new technologies to Singh, Dr Vandana Sonkar, Dr keep pace with the changing Shashi Yadav, Dr Vikas Jaiswal, Dr Ishi Mohan and Di Dr Vinita Singh, Dr Pallavi, Dr

Mauni Amavasya: Rlys to run over 150 specials

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

The Railways will run more than 150 special trains for the biggest Amrit Snan of Maha Kumbh, Mauni Amavasya. The Railways has decided to run special trains from Prayagraj Junction, Chheoki, Naini, Prayag, Prayagraj Rambag stations. DRM Prayagraj Himanshu Badoni while talking to mediapersons said if routine trains from eight stations of three zonal railways in Prayagraj are included, then this number will cross 400.

The DRM said 950 special trains have been run from January 13 to 23. He added that on Makar Sankranti, the Railways operated 134 trains on demand. This time more trains will be run for Mauni Amavasva. Due to this a total of 58 long distance trains have been cancelled on different dates and 28 trains coming to Pravagrai have shifted to Chheoki railway station. So far 13.20 lakh passengers

22 mela spl trains to run today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

As many as 22 Maha Kumbh Mela Special trains will be run from/ through Varanasi Division or North Eastern Railway (NER) on January 26. Giving this information, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Ashok Kumar said these Mela Special trains running from Banaras are train number 05109 Banaras-Jhusi Mela special train that will depart from Banaras at 8 am and reach Jhusi at 10.45 am; 05105 Banaras-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special train will depart from Banaras at

Mahakumbh between January 11 and 23. These figures are engers with unreserved

12.30 pm and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 3.45 pm; 05111 Banaras-Jhusi Mela Special train will depart from Banaras at 4.45 and reach Jhusi at 7.45 pm; 05107 Banaras-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special train Rambag Mela Special train will depart from Banaras at 8.30 pm and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 11.45 pm; 04114 Banaras-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special Ring Rail train will depart from Banaras at 4.25 am and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 7.43 am Rambag at 7.43 am.

The other Mela special trains include Ring Rail train number 04112 Ayodhya-Prayagraj Rambag which will depart

have travelled in the Naini stations. During this period, the railway administration earned an income of Rs 71 28 crore and reserved tickets from The DRM said if the crowd vided to the passengers by Prayagraj Junction, increases at the Prayagraj ISKCON. If the crowd Chheoki, Subedarganj and junction on Mauni increases at Subedarganj sta-

from Ayodhya at 10.50 am and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 8.40 pm; 05173 Bhatni-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special Train will depart from Special Train will depart from Bhatni at 5:30 am and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 1.00 pm; 05133 Ballia-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special train will depart from Ballia at 4.45pm and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 11.55 pm; 05129 Chhapra-Jhusi Mela Special train running from Chhapra train running from Chhapra will depart from Chhapra at 6.30 pm and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 2.25 am on the next day; 05185 Gorakhpur-Prayagraj Rambag Mela

Special train running from Gorakhpur will depart from Gorakhpur at 8.30 pm and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 5.30 am the next day; 05119 Gorakhpur-Prayagraj Rambag Mela Special train running from Gorakhpur will depart from Gorakhpur at 8.30 am and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 5.45 am and 05110 Jhusi-Banaras Mela Special train will depart from Jhusi at 12.45 pm and reach Banaras at 3.50

Meanwhile, 16 Maha Kumbh Mela Special trains were operated from/through Varanasi Division on Saturday.

Amavasya, then the passen- tion on Mauni Amavasya, gers will be stopped at the then 150 buses will be shelter built in Khusro Bagh. arranged around the station, There too, food will be pro-Meanwhile the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) will operate 8,000 buses. Seven hurt ties, he and ACMOs and as truck hits Bolero

Shantanu Saurabh, Dasarath Kumar Sonker besides NSS

Central team visits UPHC Manduadih 'Cyber crime is distorted form of PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI misuse of science & technology' two-member central team

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

A one-day workshop on cyber security was organised on Saturday under the Cyber Security course being run under the aegis of UGDCA, Computer Centre, operated under IQAC at DAV PG College. Chief guest and Inspector in-charge of Cyber police station, Varanasi Rajeev Kumar Singh said that cyber fraudsters make people their victims by taking advantage of greed and ignorance.

There is no need to be afraid of them, but there is a need to be aware and alert", he said, adding that for any cyber crime, immediately inform the toll free number 1930 issued by the government. In the last one year, more than 100 thugs, fraudsters have been sent behind bars and Rs 5.5 crore was recovered from them, he claimed. Key speaker and cyber expert ASI Shyamlal Gupta of Varanasi police commissionerate said that at present there are more than 300 types of cyber frauds, which are making peo- market for digital criminals, the



ple their victims. According to the report of the Home Ministry, the area from Sigra to Bhelupur in Varanasi has become a hot spot of cyber fraud as 8-10 cases are being registered daily and out of which we are able to dispose of many cases quickly. He said that the police never does online inquiry, so there is no need to be afraid of calls coming

in the name of police. Special speaker Dr Mayank Pratap (Associate Professor of Law Department, BHU) said that there should be more talk of cyber security than cyber crime as India ranks third in the world in cyber attacks and in such a situation we need to be more aware. Senior advocate Anupam Dwivedi said that India is a big

A two-member central team comprising Colonel Dr Manas Roy and Dr Pawan Singh evaluated the Urban race to earn quick money traps us in their net. Presiding over the function, the acting principal of the college Prof Mishrilal said Primary Health Centre (UPHC) Manduadih on 12 cyber crime is a distorted form of parameters under the National Quality Assurance Standards misuse of science and technology, awareness about it is necessary (NQAŚ) here on Friday. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr for all sections of the society. Sandeep Chaudhary said that medical and health facilities Before this, the secretary/ man-ager of the college Ajit Kumar Singh Yadav welcomed the guests are being continuously expandby presenting them with memen-toes and shawls. The programme ed and strengthened in the community and primary health centres (CHCs/ PHCs) operatwas coordinated by course coordinator Dr Shantanu Saurabh. It ing in the district. "Continuous efforts are also was conducted by Najam Ujj

"Continuous efforts are also being made to provide quality in the services being provided in hospitals. The NQAS pro-Jamal. Vice-Principal Prof Rahul, Prof Sangeeta Jain, Prof Satyagopal, Prof Vijaynath Dubey, Prof Sanjay Sah, Kaveri Sharma, gramme was launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Sandhya Shrivastava, Rozina Welfare to identify better performing facilities as well as SEMINAR: An interactive improve the credibility of pubseminar on 'From Isolation to Connection: Understanding peer support system' was held lic hospitals in the community," he said. Senior doctor Rakesh Kumar Singh said the Central government team which had in the Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University on Friday. The event come here for a two-day evaluwas led by pyschological counation was taken on a tour of the sellor Divya Singh. The session was organised by Student Wellbeing Committee. hospital and as per the NQAS checklist each point of the 12 parameters was examined and



Central team for NQAS evaluation at UPHC Manduadih in Varanasi

important suggestions were given. Divisional Quality Assurance Consultant Dr Tanveer Siddiqui said the NQAS certificate is given to the PHCs and CHCs for doing better work on the 12 parameters set by the Central government, such as infectious diseases, emergency services, family welfare services, general administration, external diseases, vaccination, laboratory, delivery room, newborn and child health, non-infectious diseases, pharmacy and region-al services. Nodal officer of the programme, Dr YB Pathak, nodal officer of the city area Dr Amit Singh, in

charge of the UPHC Dr Nidhi Pandey and coordinator of the urban area Ashish Singh

were present. DIRECTIVE: As per the instructions given by the Director General (Medical and Health Services), Uttar Pradesh, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) along with Additional Chief Medical Officers and Deputy Chief Medical Officers will see patients in various hospitals of the district. In this direction, an instruction was issued by the CMO Dr Sandeep Chaudhary on Friday. He informed that along with discharging his administrative responsibili-

DCMOs will do medical work for two hours per day as far as possible three days a week. All the ACMOs and DCMOs working in the district have been allotted various hospitals for giving med-ical advice while examining patients in OPD for two hours three days a week. The CMO informed that medical consultation will be given by him at Urban Community Health Centres (UCHCs) Durgakund, Chowkaghat and Shivpur, by Dr Sanjay Kumar Rai at Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHCs) Madanpura, Bhelupur and SVM Hospital Bhelupur, by Dr SS Kanaujia at CHC Cholapur, by Dr AK Maurya at CHCs Shivpur, Sarnath and Chowkaghat, by Dr Rajesh Prasad at UPHCs Manduadih and Durgakund, by Dr Harishchandra Maurya at UPHCs Pandeypur, Orderly Bazaar and Shivpur, by Dr Piyush Rai at TB Unit Kabirchaura, by Dr YB Pathak at UPHCs Manduadih, Bajardiha and Durgakund and by Dr Amit Singh at TB Unit Kabirchaura from 9 am to 11 am on different working days.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRA.

Seven persons, including three women, were seriously injured when the Bolero in which they were returning after Kumbh Mela snan was hit by a speeding truck at Bharauti intersection near IFFCO police post in the Phulpur Kotwali area here on Saturday. According to a report, the accident took place when the truck driver suddenly tried to turn and collided with the Bolero coming from behind. The collision was so severe that the diesel tank of the truck burst and oil spilled on the road due to which the bike riders started slipping. The villagers took all the injured to the Community Health Centre (CHC) Phulpur in private vehicles. Inspector Phoolpur Deendayal Singh said all the injured were sent to a private hospital and the mat-ter is being investigated.

Workshop on superannuation planning held IFFCO Phulpur: Empowering farmers & strengthening food security

Bano etc were also present.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW

A one-day workshop on superannuation planning was organised at NTPC-NRHQ, Lucknow on Friday. The aim of the session was to prepare the employees for a secure and well-planned retirement.

Regional Executive Director (North), NTPC Northern HQ, NS Rao, graced the event as the chief guest. Speaking at the inaugural session, Rao empha-



sised the importance of such workshops in equipping employees with practical financial management strate-gies and raising awareness about the significance of retirement planning. He appreciated the HR team for heir efforts in organising the event.

The workshop featured T Suresh, Founder of CEBR Financial Planners Pvt Ltd., Hyderabad, as the esteemed faculty. It covered essential aspects of financial planning, including importance of diver-sified investments for maximising retirement benefits to ensure a seamless transition from active employment to retirement.

The event saw active participation from GM (Operation Services) Amreek Singh Bhogal, GM (HR) Samiran Sinha Ray, along with other heads of departments, senior officials and employees contributing to its success.

Prayagraj (PNS): IFFCO, a multi-state cooperative society focused on the production and distribution of fertilisers, was established in 1967 by 57 Indian cooperatives with the goal of improving the livelihoods of Indian farmers and ensuring the country's food security. Today through more than 35,000 cooperative societies across India, IFFCO directly serves over five crore farmers. Over the past 57 years, IFFCO has consistently met the needs of farmers by offering high-quality agricultur-al inputs and expert technical

guidance thereby empowering involved in diverse sectors such them at every stage of their farming journey. IFFCO produces approximately 9.6 million metric tonnes of conventional fertilisers annually from its five state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities across India. This contributes around 32 per cent of the country's phosphatic fertilis-ers and 21 per cent of nitrogenous fertilisers.IFFCO has expanded its global presence through joint ventures in Oman, Senegal, Jordan, and Dubai. In addition to its core fertiliser agri-technologies and deepening business, IFFCO is actively cooperative engagements.

as food processing, organics, ebazaars, general insurance, special economic zones (SEZs) and international trade. By offering a wide range of nitrogenous, phos-phatic, biofertilisers, water-soluble fertilisers and specialty products, including nano fertilizers, IFFCO has consistently contributed to increasing food productivity. IFFCO has proved testament of its dedication towards enhancing farmers income, developing new highly advanced

nation 05

Infantry (JAKLI) regiment and

a contingent of the Corps of

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 mem-

ber of her contingent and the

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

"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-born salute to the

president in the history of

States that will display their

tableaux during the 76th

Republic Day celebrations.

Engineers.

rest are men.

in line.



76th Republic Day 2025: unveil military might and cultural richnes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

India is set to showcase its mil-Litary 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 on the occasion. A 552-member marching and band contingent from Indonesia will be partici-pating in the parade. Subianto will be the fourth Indonesian president to attend India's Republic Day celebra

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, multibarrel 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 "iointness" among the armed forces.

The tableau would display a battlefield scenario demonstrating 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',

President Droupadi Murmu will deliver an address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day.

officials said.

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 of India's heritage and growth. lead the nation in paying tribute C-130J Super Hercules, C-295,

to the country's martyrs by lay-C-17 Globemaster, P-8I, MiG-29 ing a wreath at the National War and Su-30, among other aircraft, will also take part in the cele-Memorial. brations.

The parade will begin in the morning with the National The ceremonial parade will be Salute and will continue for 90 heralded by 300 cultural artistes minutes, reflecting the journey 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

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 contin-

gent, Jat Regiment, Garhwal

Rifles Regiment, J&K Light

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 mis-

leading impression that the remaining nine candidates were profiles and fee receipts subalso enrolled in the 'GS mitted by Vision IAS and dis-Foundation Batch Classroom covered that the Foundation Student' course which was not course is the most expensive,

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% didates- 1 took foundation students able to clear the said courses, 6 took test series relatstage, making it the toughest ed to Pre and Mains stage and stage with the most competi-2 took Abhyaas test. Further, tion. CCPA examined the digital The abovementioned students

took GS Mains test series which is one of the various components of the Mains examination which implies that the aforementioned 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 abovementioned 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 adver-

tisement. 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

and home guard service and four to correctional service. A total of 942 police, fire and civil defence per-sonnel have been awarded Among the 746 Medals for Meritorious Service (MSM), 634 have been awarded to different categories of galpolice service, 37 to fire serce. 39 to civil defence an 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.

nel, seven to civil defence

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The NHRC has admitted a petition filed by a Jammubased 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-anda-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 com-

plained 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 bac-

terial 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.

ongress 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

NEW DELHI

functioning makes a "mockery" of the Constitution and is an insult to the voters themselves. The opposition party also

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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-

who supervised the probe into

the Madhya Pradesh nursing

scam and big-ticket corruption

involving the seizure of huge cash

-- also received the medal



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 incharge 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.

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-

31 CBI officers awarded Police CEC Rajiv Kumar medals on 76th Republic Day urges parties to avoid

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Officers who supervised probes into the Manipur riots, online trading scams, bigticket corruption and the postpoll 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 vio-lence 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 disruptive campaigning PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

hief 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 Artificial Lakes.

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 worldclass futuristic city being planned in Gurugram on Dwarka Expressway, based on live, work, and play at its core and a transitoriented 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

the awardees.

The Police Medal for Meritorious Service was awarded to 25 officers, including Joint Director Rajiv Ranjan -- who supervised the illegal mining case of Jharkhand involving an alleged close aide of the chief minister and the Saradha scam, among other corruption cases. Deputy Director (Admin and Personnel) Kuldeep Dwivedi --

world 06

forces, said Palestinians will be

able to move between southern

and northern Gaza on foot

through the coastal Rashid

What happens after the deal's

initial six-week phase is uncer-tain, but many hope it will lead

road.

Palestinians prisoners released in ceasefire deal arrive in West Bank

AP TEL AVIV

 $T_{\rm in\ the\ West\ Bank\ city\ of}^{\rm housands\ of\ Palestinians}$ Ramallah celebrated the arrival of buses carrying dozens of prisoners released as part of the İsrael-Hamas ceasefire. Israel said it released a total of 200 prisoners after Hamas

LUCKNOW | SUNDAY | JANUARY 26, 2025

freed four young, female Israeli soldiers. The prisoners include 120 who were serving life sentences

after being convicted of deadly attacks on Israelis. Around 70 were released into Egypt. Hamas militants handed over

four captive female Israeli soldiers to the Red Cross in Gaza City on Saturday after parading them in front of a crowd. Israel followed with the release of 200 Palestinian prisoners or detainees as part of the fragile ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. The four Israeli soldiers smiled

broadly as they waved and gave the thumbs-up from a stage in Gaza City's Palestine Square, militants on either side of them and a crowd of thousands watching before they were led off to waiting Red Cross vehicles.

They were likely acting under duress, with previously released hostages saying they were held in brutal conditions and forced to record propaganda videos. Israel's Prison Service later said it had completed the release of 200 Palestinians. They include 120 who had been serving life Palestinians to begin returning

sentences after being convicted of deadly attacks against Israelis. Around 70 were released into Egypt, according to Egypt's state-run Qahera TV. Egypt had served as a key mediator in the talks that led to the truce.

sunday pioneer

Later, buses carrying the remainder of the 200 Palestinian prisoners being released made their way from Ofer prison in the occupied West Bank toward Jerusalem and the city of Ramallah, where crowds of relatives and supporters awaited.

As the four Israeli soldiers were released, hundreds of people cheered in Tel Aviv's Hostages Square where they were watching the drama unfold on a big screen televi-sion. "I'm speechless," said Aviv Bercovich, one of the onlookers. "I had goosebumps watching them. I just want the war to end.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office later released a video showing the freed hostages being welcomed at an Israeli army base. One of them, Liri Albag, smiled, gave two thumbs up and made a heart shape with her hand before getting into a van.

Israel insists on the release of a civilian hostage: Netanyahu's office later said that Arbel Yehoud, a civilian hostage held by Hamas, was supposed to have been released on Saturday. It said Israel would not allow

to northern Gaza, which had been expected to begin by Sunday, until she is freed. A senior Hamas official said the group has informed mediators that Yehoud will be released next week.

Meantime, an Egyptian official involved in the negotiations called the matter a "minor issue" that mediators are working to resolve. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly.

The crowds in Tel Aviv and also in Gaza City began gathering early in the day in anticipation of the second such exchange between Israel and Hamas since a ceasefire began in the Gaza Strip last weekend. The excitement in Israel was palpable, with TV stations filled with live reports from smiling news anchors and reporters interviewing ecstatic friends and relatives of the hostages. The truce is aimed at winding

down the deadliest and most destructive war ever fought between Israel and the militant group. The fragile deal has so far held, quieting airstrikes and rockets and allowing for increased aid to flow into the

tiny coastal territory. When the ceasefire started on Sunday, three hostages held by the militants were released in exchange for 90 Palestinian prisoners, all women and children. Who are the soldiers and

prisoners being released?: The four Israeli soldiers, Karina Ariev, 20, Daniella Gilboa, 20, Naama Levy, 20, and Albag, 19, were captured in Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack that ignited the war.

In exchange, Israel agreed to release 200 prisoners, including 121 who were serving life sentences, according to a list released by Hamas. The more notorious militants

being released include Mohammad Odeh, 52, and

east Jerusalem. They were accused of carrying out a series of deadly Hamas attacks against Israelis, including a bombing at a cafeteria at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2002 that killed nine people, includ-ing five US citizens.

Egypt, some may eventually go to other countries, with Algeria, Tunisia and Turkiye all expressing a willingness to take them

Oz base near the border with Gaza when Palestinian militants overran it, killing more than 60 soldiers there. The female abductees had all served Of the 70 who were expelled to in a unit of lookouts charged

with monitoring threats along the border. A fifth female soldier in their unit, Agam Berger, 20, was abducted with them but in, according to Abdullah alnot included in the list.

"This is huge," said Gaza City resident Radwan Abu Rawiya, one of thousands who watched the hostages turned over in

Palestine Square. "People forgot about the war, destruction and are celebrating," he said.

In a televised statement, Israel's to the end of a war that has levarmy spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari confirmed the elled wide swaths of Gaza, displaced the vast majority of its released hostages were in Israeli population and left hundreds of hands and on their way home, thousands of people at risk of while criticizing what he called the "cynical" public display of the young women by Hamas before their release. famine. The conflict began with a cross-border attack led by

Hamas on October 7, 2023, He also said that Israel is conwhen Palestinian militants cerned about the fate of the two killed some 1,200 people, mostyoungest hostages - Kfir and ly civilians, and took around Ariel Bibas — and their moth-250 others hostage. er Shiri. Kfir Bibas marked his More than 100 hostages were freed in a week-long truce the following month. But dozens second birthday in captivity earlier this month.

have remained in captivity for Hagari said the army is committed to bringing all hostages over a year with no contact with the outside world. Israel home. What's next in the ceasefire believes at least a third of the more than 90 captives still

deal: Israel had been expected to begin pulling back from the Netzarim corridor — an east-west road dividing Gaza in two Zaghari, the head of a Palestinian prisoner advocacy — and allowing displaced Palestinians in the south to group. The four Israeli soldiers released were taken from Nahal return to their former homes in the north for the first time since the beginning of the war.

ity. "It's hard that she's still But that appears to be on hold pending the release of Yehoud. The Hamas-run interior minthere," said Yoni Collins, a family friend of Berger, the fifth female soldier taken from istry said earlier said that dis-Nahal Oz base. "There were five girls, four are placed Palestinians will be allowed to return to northern Gaza starting Sunday. The min-

out and now she's there alone," he said. "We're just waiting for istry, which oversees police her to come home."

only the second vice-president

in ÚS history to break a tie to

Trump's previous vice presi-

dent, Mike Pence, became the

first when he cast the deciding

vote to confirm Betsy DeVos as

During the confirmation hear-

ing, Hegseth was asked, partic-

ularly by female senators, about

his previous comments that

women should not serve in

combat roles. He responded

that his concern was not women

serving in combat, but in main-

taining a certain standard in the US military.

education secretary in 2017.

confirm a cabinet nominee.

inside Gaza were killed in the

initial attack or died in captiv-

ity. While many rejoiced in Tel

Aviv's Hostage Square after

the four soldiers were released

Saturday, some worried about

the fate of those still in captiv-

Getting hard criminals out: Trump

PTI WASHINGTON

From page 1

Within just a little over four days after Donald Trump took over as the 47th President of the United States, the country has begun deportation flights for illegal immigrants using military aircraft. Mass deporta-

In its charge-sheet, the Mumbai police officials had

said that they had found

several documents which

indicated that Rana was not

only a co-conspirator along

with incarcerated Pakistani-

American terrorist David

Coleman Headley, but that he actively participated in

the conspiracy behind the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai.

He had helped Headley get

tion of illegal immigrants has been one of the major poll promises of the Trump campaign. As part of it, Trump has also signed an executive order declaring that future children born to undocumented immigrants would no longer be treat-ed as citizens. The Department

At the time of filing a

supplementary charge-sheet against Rana, Special public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam said that he would

present before the court

material" the crime branch

had gathered during its investigation against the accused, and seek a non-

bailable warrant against him. He said he had a

"catalogue of evidence"

some

an Indian tourist visa based against Rana whose name

"incriminating

of Defense said two of its aircraft military aircraft, the first since President Dwight Eisenhower, conducted repatriation flights have begun. "Deportation flights have begun. President Trump is from the US to Guatemala. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt later told sending a strong and clear message to the entire world: if you illegally enter the United States reporters that Trump's border policies have already led to the arrest of 538 illegal immigrants of America, you will face severe consequences," she wrote on X. and deportation flights using

Talking to reporters in North Carolina, President Trump said, "Deportation is going very well. We're getting the bad, hard criminals out. These are murderers. These are people that have been as bad as you get, as bad as anybody you've seen. We're taking them out first."



Ansari alias Abu Jundal trial in December 2015 after the From page 1 Mumbai court pardoned

agreement An signed between India and Indonesia on Saturday in the maritime California, Judge Jacqueline Chooljian had ordered the security sphere will further strengthen cooperation in crime prevention, search and rescue and capacity building, Modi said. He said both sides talked on the need to diversify the trade basket and market access to boost the

"The extradition of Rana to on fake documents, that was first revealed by the US India is stayed pending the overall economic ties. "We decided to stre his appeal cooperation in areas like FinTech. artificial intelligence, internet of accelerate the economic things and digital public partnership with India," infrastructure," the prime Subianto said.

minister noted. He also said that both sides laid stress on

cooperation in maritime security, cyber security, counter-terrorism and deradicalisation.

In the talks, the Indian side also welcomed Indonesia's BRICS membership. In his remarks, the Indonesian leader described the talks as 'very frank" and said both sides have agreed to expand cooperation in many key sectors of common interest.

women

Hegseth confirmed as US Def Secy Washington (PTI): The US All 47 Democrats voted against Senate has narrowly confirmed Hegseth, a former Fox News Pete Hegseth as the country's host. Three Republican Senators Defence Secretary after Vice Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski President J D Vance cast a rare and Mitch McConnell also voted tiebreaker vote, approving President Donald Trump's pick against him. Hegseth's confirmation process has been mired in allegations of sexual assault, to lead the Pentagon after a con-tentious battle over his nominaalcohol abuse and financial mistion amid allegations of sexual management of veterans' charassault and alcohol abuse. ities, all of which he has denied. In the 100-member Senate, the Friday's confirmation vote marked a significant victory for the Trump administration, which has backed Hegseth as its nominee, despite his lack of

ruling Republican Party has 53 members. With the vote tied at 50-50, Vance used his rare vote to confirm the nomination of experience and allegations against him. Vance becomes Hegseth, 44, a veteran of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

announce Padma Awards Government Saturday. Libia Lobo Sardesai, dominated field. From page 1

As many as 113 persons were awarded Padma Shri including 30 people in the unsung heroes category. A 100-year old freedom fighter from Goa, a Dhak player from West Bengal who trained 150 in the male-

who played an important role A vocal advocate of woman in Goa's freedom movement, radio station — 'Voz da Liberdabe (Voice of Freedom)' — in a forested school area in 1955 to rally people against the Portuguese rule. so among the awardees is

empowerment, 82-year old Sally Holkar transformed once dying Maheshwari craft and founded Handloom in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh, to give training in traditional chniques. Born in weaving t America and Inspired by Rani Ahilyabai Holkar's legacy, she devoted five decades of her

Israeli female soldier hostages wave at a Palestinian crowd before being handed over to the Red Cross in Gaza City, on AP/PTI Saturday

Wael Qassim, 54, both from

allegedly provided logistical Taiba for the 26/11 attacks

support to the Lashkar-e- Headley, who was the 26/11 conspirator in the 26/11

national David Headley

before the United States Court of Appeals for the and that there was evidence terror strike case, had Ninth Circuit,^{*} Judge Fischer in the form of an email sent turned an approver in the had said in the order issued by Headley to Rana. trial of key 26/11 on August 18, 2023.

conclusion of

Rana.

conspirator

him in the case, In May

2023, the Magistrate Judge, US District Court of

extradition of Rana in the

26/11 attacks case. However,

another US court on August

18 stayed the extradition of

"I have given directions to our officials that we need to accelerate the economic

first woman puppeteers are among 30 unsung heroes who

dominated field and India's Gokul Chandra Dey, a 57vear old Dhak player from West Bengal who broke the were awarded Padma Shri, a gender stereotype by training life to revitalise 300-year-old government statement said on 150 women in the male- weaving legacy.

Clean Yamana in three years, metro rides for youth...

From page 1

He also announced that the 13,000 shops in Delhi which are sealed will be reopened. "We have worked with lawyers to find a legal path to reopen them. We will create a iudicial authority and reopen these shops within six months to resume operations."

been established since 1947, enhance such as Rajendra Nagar, Lajpat Nagar, and Kingsway Camp, currently have people on lease; they cannot sell or buy the land. We will grant ownership rights to all these refugees who have land on first Cabinet meeting," Shah added.

The Home Minister also announced the establishment of a Workers Welfare Board in Delhi, which will ensure that

all workers have life insurance The party also promised to coverage of up to 10 lakh and accident insurance of up to 5 lakh. Additionally, their children will receive clock. advantages.

"We will apply the same formula for textile workers. We will provide Rs 10,000 as assistance to workers, and for registered workers, we will Refugee colonies that have offer loans up to 3 lakh to skills and

businesses," he said. Home Minister The promised to provide 50,000 government jobs to the youth of Delhi in a transparent way without any corruption in addition to creating 20 lakh lease in these colonies in the self-employment opportunities. The government, if voted to power, will provide Rs 4,000

us after three years of our every year in National government to take a dip in Common Mobility Card the Yamuna with his family. We will end manual (NCMC) to needy students.

scavenging 100 per cent and eliminate this inhumane practice completely," he said. complete the phase- IV of the Delhi metro soon and provide Upon the Ayushman Bharat buses and metro round the Scheme' which has been a flash point between the Through an investment of Centre and AAP ruled Delhi 20,000 crore, we will develop government, the minister an integrated public transport added that as soon the party network and convert 13,000 buses into electric buses, making Delhi a 100 per cent forms government, in the first Cabinet meeting only, they will implement the Centre's electric bus city under the BJP government," he said. scheme.

The BJP also announced Rs He also underlined that to promote tourism, they will 10 lakh as life insurance for collaborate with the Uttar Pradesh and Haryana accredited journalists and lawyers and Rs 10 lakh to governments to create a them for health and accident insurance.

"We will develop the Yamuna Riverfront, similar to the Shah reaffirmed that the BJP would not halt ongoing welfare initiatives for the poor Sabarmati Riverfront. I would like to invite Kejriwal to join in Delhi.The party has already announced several poll promises in the first and second part of the manifesto. In part 1 of its 'Sankalp Patra,

the BJP promised to open an Atal Canteen for people, free cvlinders for poor women on Holi and Diwali and Rs 2500 for women in the national capital. For senior citizens, the BJP announced Rs 2500 per month and Rs 3000 for widows and Divyang people. The saffron party said that an Atal canteen will be opened in Jhuggis and pregnant women will be given Rs 21,000 for their health welfare and six 'Poshan Kit' (Nutrition Kit). In part 2, the party promised Rs 15,000 to youth for exams and free education for needy students from Kindergarten (KP) KG to Post Graduation (PG), in Delhi if voted to power. As per the announcement, BJP will provide free education 'from KG to PG' to needy students in government education institutes only.

Rahul had previously alleged that Kejriwal was following PM Modi's "strategy of propaganda and false propaganda and false promises" while failing to address rising pollution, corruption, and inflation in the capital. On another occasion, he charged that both the Prime Minister and the AAP chief do not want marginalised groups, such as Dalits and tribals, to receive their due.Congress leader Ajay who previously Kejriwal "anti-Maken, labelled national," and Sandeep Dikshit, the son of Sheila Dikshit contesting against the AAP supremo in the New Delhi constituency, also appear on the poster.

Modi, Rahul features in AAP list of corrupt leaders and bore a picture of Arvind

From page 1

Meanwhile, Delhi Congress on Saturday approached the Election Commission of India with a complaint of a "defamatory poster" on social media uploaded by AAP against its leaders. According to the complaint, the ruling party in Delhi targeted its former president Rahul Gandhi along with other leaders.

"This is to bring to your kind notice that on Saturday, AAP (Aam Aadmi Party) on its authorised X handle has posted a defamatory picture against various senior Congress Leaders - Lok Sabha Lop Rahul Gandhi, AICC treasurer Ajay Maken, and Sandip Dikshit," it read. The post was headlined "Ek akela padega sab par bhaari,"

quality and digital inclusion,

languages. Murmu noted that

women teachers have played a

crucial role in this educational

transformation, with over 60

percent of new teachers being

in regional

especially

women

Keiriwal with the caption 'Keiriwal ki imaandari,' and those of Congress leaders beneath his, captioned "sare beimano par padegi bhaar," the complaint read. "The post itself is in violation of the Model Code of Conduct as well as the provisions of Representation of Peoples Act 1951. Furthermore Kejriwal has been projected as an honest man and targeting senior Congress leaders such as Gandhi, Maken, and Dikshit are dishonest people. "It is submitted that the said post is baseless and without any authenticity thereby trying to malign the reputation of senior Congress leaders during the election time. The said post is a malicious attempt for political gains," the complaint stated.

From page 1

The President also pointed to the persistently high economic growth rate in recent years, which has generated job opportunities, increased income for farmers and labourers, and lifted many out of poverty.

underscored She the importance of inclusive growth and the government's commitment to welfare, making basic necessities such as housing and access to clean drinking water entitlements for citizens.

Efforts to support marginalised communities, particularly those belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), were also highlighted.

Murmu mentioned various

initiatives, including prematric and post-matric scholarships, national fellowships, and dedicated schemes aimed at the socioeconomic development of these communities, such as Pradhan the Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan.

The President's address underscored the government's commitment to fostering growth and inclusive redefining governance standards in the country, creating a vision for a more equitable and prosperous future for all citizens.

She emphasised that this occasion is a collective celebration of joy and pride for The President praised the

President Murmu bats ONOE

communities

destiny," she said.

advancements.

Shifting focus to present-day

she

all citizens and remarked that while 75 years may seem like a brief moment in the life of a nation, it has been a significant period for India, marked by the revival of its long-dormant spirit and its journey to reclaim its rightful status the among world's civilisations.

Mahabharata corridor.

Reflecting on India's historical journey, she urged citizens to remember the brave souls who sacrificed their lives for the nation's freedom, highlighting the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, whose contributions to the freedom movement are now receiving due recognition.

early 20th-century freedom represented fighters for uniting the nation in a well-organised independence movement and credited iconic figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and Babasaheb Ambedkar for helping India rediscover its democratic values.

"Justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity are not just modern concepts; they have always been integral to our civilisational heritage," she asserted, noting that skeptics of the Constitution's future were proven wrong. Murmu highlighted

the inclusive nature of the Constituent Assembly, which

emphasis on physical infrastructure development, diverse across the nation, including 15 women members who played pivotal roles in shaping the country's which has laid the groundwork for sustained growth. democratic framework.

Šhe commended innovative use of technology "When women's equality was a in finance, noting that digital distant goal in many parts of the world, Indian women were payment systems and direct transfers have actively engaged in the nation's benefit enhanced inclusion and The Constitution, according transparency in the economy. The health of the banking to the President, has evolved into a living document that serves as the foundation of system has improved due to reforms like the Insolvency India's collective identity and and Bankruptcy Code, which has guided the nation's significantly reduced nonperforming progress over the past 75 years. assets

commercial banks. Looking towards the future, highlighted the government's the President underscored the

the

in

independence.

She expressed hope that future generations will recognise the pivotal role of the Constitution

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, she reiterated the importance of morality in governance and civic life, stating, "If Swaraj was not meant to civilize us, it would be nothing worth." The President called for a

renewed commitment to Gandhiji's ideals of truth, nonviolence, and compassion not just towards fellow humans but also towards nature.

She urged all citizens to As India marches confidently towards the future, the reaffirm their dedication to President affirmed that the realising the dreams of a dreams of today's youth, prosperous, inclusive, and particularly young women, morally conscious India as the will shape the nation by the time it celebrates a century of country looks forward to its future.

importance of education in in guiding their journey. shaping the next generation. The government has increased investments in the education sector, resulting in substantial improvements in learning



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hen 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

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 outest 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-thanlife 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

Family Drama on Stage

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



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 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



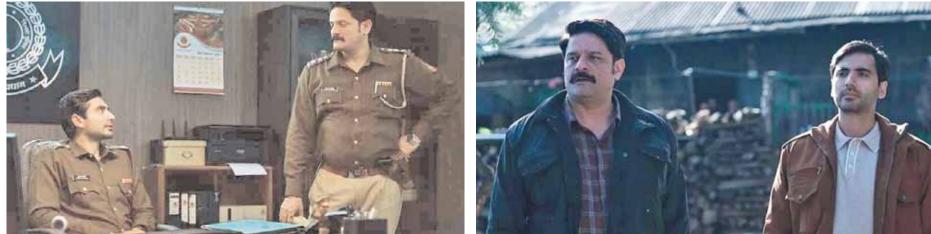


Cast Members Megha Mathu



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**



aking away all the popularity even in the pandemic era, Pataal 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 multilayered 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

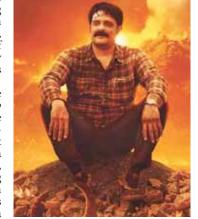
crime. In order to track down a strange woman named Rose Lizo (Merenla Imsong), whose existence connects several story threads, Hathi Ram and his former coworker Ansari (Ishwak Singh) work to catch her.

Paatal Lok Season 2 chooses a slowburning 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

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 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 or a scaipel, 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

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 Arun's

RATING: 4/5

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.

episodes in the series. The cast shines across the board.





DIDI IMDB Rating: 7.4/10 OTT: JioCinema SWEET DREAMS OTT: Disney + Hotstar Director: Victor Mukherjee Cast: Amol Parashar, Mithila Palkar Director: Sean Wang

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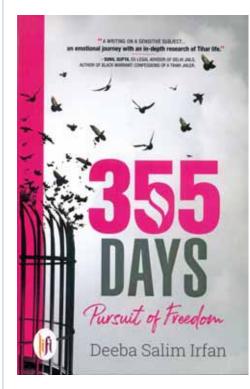
HISAAB BARABAR IMDB Rating: 7.1/10 OTT: ZEE5 Director: Ashwni Dhir Cast: R Madhavan, Neil Nitin Mukesh, Kirti Kulhari

THE NIGHT AGENT SEASON 2 IMDB Rating: 8/10 **OTT:** Netflix Cast: Gabriel Basso, Luciane Buchanan, Fola Evans-Akingbola









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.

ith Black Warrant topping Netflix charts as the No. 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 Jai*l is more than just a prison – it is a world within a world, housing individuals from all walks of life. From petty criminals to highprofile 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

hanging Perception of

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 inspired by true events compel other stor 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 cru 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





former Tihar Superintendent and ex-Legal







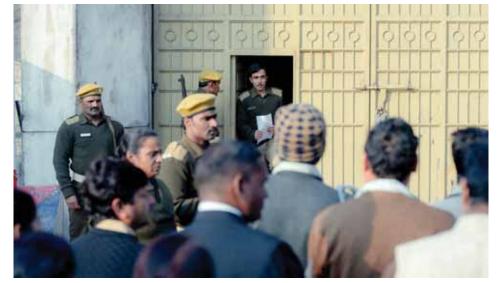


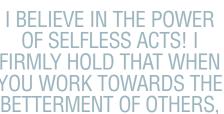
kindness, and making a difference!" Literature and media have the unique ability to humanise even the most vilified. By presenting detailed, empathetic narratives, they remind us that every prisoner has a story, a past and, perhaps, a chance at a better future. Stories like Black Warrant and 355 Days 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







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!



"ONE CANNOT THINK WELL, LOVE WELL, SLEEP WELL IF ONE HAS NOT DINED WELL" - M.F.K. FISHER

Lucknow, January 26, 2025







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

ver 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 and comfortable ontemporary The

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.

both One of the restaurant's most endable asr comi

design masterfully blends rustic and

modern elements, allowing guests to feel

like they are dining in the heart of San

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

diversity, just like San Francisco itself, with touches of California's innovative

American-inspired cuisine is rich in

Francisco.



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 uest 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 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 excellence in service sets Mission Bay for a romantic date, a family gathering, or a meal with friends. The bianc

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 toffeeflavored sauce, creating a dense, caramellike 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 mustvisit.

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 ikes you feel right at home



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.

o 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.

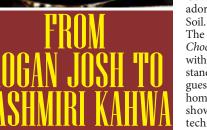
The main course was a grand celebration of flavours, where traditional Kashmiri recipes were brought to life with timeless cooking techniques. Vegetarian delights included the famed Dum Aloo, aromatic Chaman Tamatar, and the distinctive Chaman Roganjosh, all complemented by the hearty Haak and Kashmiri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

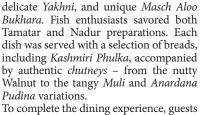
Non-vegetarians were equally indulged with the legendary Mutton Roganjosh,





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





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.

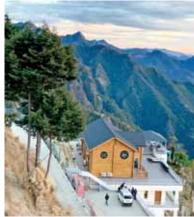




"TRAVEL IS NEVER A MATTER OF MONEY BUT OF COURAGE." — PAOLO COELHO

Travel Lucknow, January 26, 2025

FINDING SOUL CONNECTIONS AT SOUL STORIES



oul Stories - Luxury Villas and Resort, Mussoorie, the birdwatching resort and retreat offers a haven for nature lovers and peace seekers alike. Surrounded by dense oak, deodar and rhododendron forests, this retreat is not just a destination but an experience that reconnects you with nature, tranquillity, and yourself. Whether you're an avid bird watcher or someone looking to escape the chaos of urban life, Soul Stories promises an unparalleled blend of adventure and solace. Located near Dhanulti, in Tehri Garhwal district, Uttarakhand, India. Dhanaulti is located on the popular tourist circuit of Landour, Mussoorie, Kanatal, Chamba and New Tehri. Soul Stories is easily accessible from Delhi and other parts of the country via Dehradun, followed by a scenic two-hour drive.

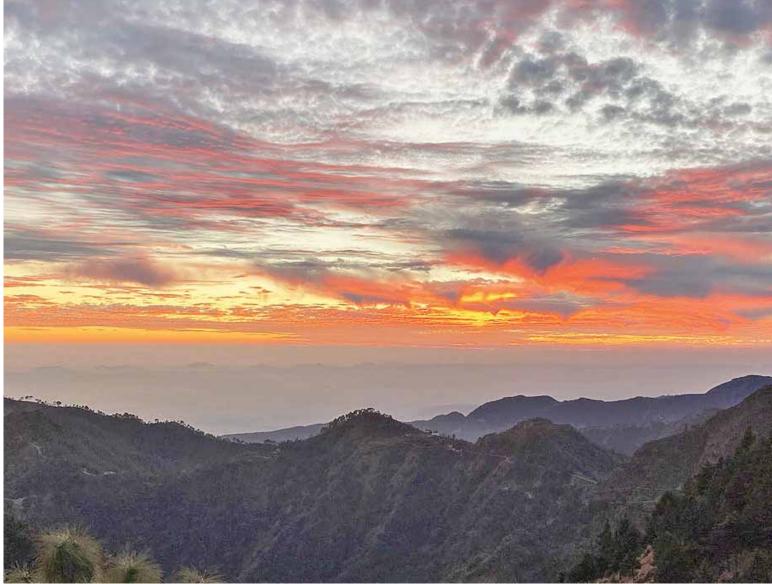
THE ALLURE OF SOUL STORIES BIRD-WATCHING RETREAT

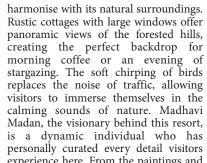
One of the retreat's standout features is its rich biodiversity. Dhanaulti, perched at an altitude of around 2,250 meters in the vicinity of Mussoorie, is home to an astonishing variety of avian species. From the vibrant Himalayan monal, the state bird of Uttarakhand, to colourful flycatchers, woodpeckers and thrushes, the retreat is a paradise for ornithologists and casual bird watchers alike. Guided bird-watching trails led by local experts ensure you don't miss out on spotting rare and exquisite birds.

The retreat is carefully designed to



Whether you're an avid bird watcher or someone looking to escape the chaos of urban life, Soul Stories promises an unparalleled blend of adventure and soulful experience, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**









personal rejuvenation. Unlike traditional retreats, it combines the joy of bird watching with holistic wellness practices such as yoga, meditation and mindfulness walking on the pathways around. For those seeking deeper connections, there are bonfire evenings where guests can share their experiences and bond with like-minded individuals. The idea is to create a community where stories and nature blend to form lasting memories.

ESCAPE FROM THE MADDENING CROWD

In an increasingly chaotic world, finding peace can feel like an elusive goal. Dhanaulti's remoteness makes it an ideal destination for those looking to unplug. With limited connectivity and a deliberate emphasis on slow living, Soul Stories encourages guests to step away from their screens and immerse themselves in the present moment. The serene environment fosters introspection, creativity and a sense of calm that lingers long after you leave.

SUSTAINABILITY AT ITS CORE

Soul Stories is committed to sustainable tourism. The retreat employs ecofriendly practices such as rainwater harvesting, solar energy, and organic farming to minimise its ecological footprint. Additionally, they actively engage with the local community by employing local guides and sourcing ingredients for their delicious, wholesome meals from nearby farms.

WHY SOUL STORIES SHOULD BE YOUR NEXT GETAWAY

Whether you're a seasoned birder, a wellness enthusiast or simply someone yearning for a break from the daily grind, Soul Stories offers something for everyone. Its combination of natural beauty, thoughtful amenities, and enriching experiences makes it a sanctuary where you can find peace, inspiration, and joy.

In the words of a recent

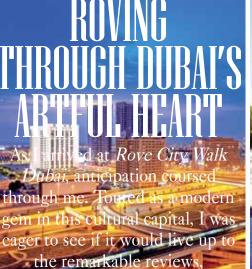
artifacts to the designer furniture, each element reflects her passion and impeccable taste, seamlessly harmonising with the natural surroundings.

A PLACE TO RECONNECT AND RECHARGE Soul Stories stands out for more than its

natural beauty; it offers an opportunity

Stories is not just about luxury and finding solace amidst nature; it is about discovering your own self. A place where you can hear silence and listen to vour inner voices." So pack your bags, leave your worries behind, and let the hills of Dhanaulti and the birds of Soul Stories guide you to a state of blissful serenity.







s I stepped into the vibrant realm of Rove *City Walk*, the first thing that struck me was The energy of the lobby. It wasn't just a reception area; it was a hub of creativity and warmth. I was immediately enveloped by a design philosophy that blended harmoniously with its lush surroundings. Channelling the spirit of the local environment, the hotel intertwines the tales of Dubai's rich culture with modern touches, creating captivating backdrops that demand to be photographed. This isn't just a hotel; it's a canvas where every corner tells a story waiting to be shared on Instagram. This artistic flair was a delightful prelude to the stylish experience awaiting me. STYLISH COMFORT IN DOWNTOWN

DUBAI: The check-in was seamless, thanks to the friendly and engaging staff who made me feel at home from the moment I arrived. Located in the heart of the city, I felt the pulse of Dubai within my reach. Just a 15-minute journey from Dubai International Airport, the hotel's strategic location makes it ideal for both business travellers and holidaymakers alike. My home for the stay was one of the 560 spacious rooms, each designed with the modern traveller in mind.

My room, with its innovative décor and local

artworks, was a cosy retreat. Looking out the window, the view of the majestic Burj Khalifa was awe-inspiring, creating a perfect backdrop for my stay. I loved that 30 percent of these rooms are interconnecting, a thoughtful feature for families or groups. With complimentary Wi-Fi, plush designer mattresses, and sofa beds perfect for unwinding after a day of exploration, it felt like the ideal sanctuary. The modern bathrooms, complete with power rain showers, were the cherry on top, offering a refreshing escape.

The sense of ease continued beyond the room. The 24-hour gym kept me motivated, while the inviting pool and sun deck offered a tranquil refuge for relaxation. A self-service laundromat and a boutique convenience store added to the sense of independent living, making it feel like I could call this place my own. The hotel also features coworking spaces that are both functional and inspiring for creativity, making it an excellent choice for business gatherings and social celebrations.

The Daily, an all-day neighbourhood hangout, was the perfect spot to unwind. Whether dining in or grabbing something for later, I was never disappointed. Quality coffee paired with globally-



says AKANKSHA DEAN

inspired, nutritious dishes kept me fuelled for my adventures, and the vibe was just right for casual conversations with fellow travellers.

DOWNTOWN'S VIBRANT CHARM: One of the best aspects of staying at Rove City Walk is its prime location, coupled with the convenience of a complimentary shuttle service to various attractions. A leisurely stroll led me to the iconic Coca-Cola Arena at City Walk, and it was just as easy to dip my toes in the sparkling waters of Iumeirah Beach

I hopped on the hotel bus, which whisked me away to the sprawling Dubai Mall. As I arrived at one of the world's largest shopping destinations, the sheer

scale and opulence of the mall took my breath away. I strolled past luxury boutiques, indulged in some retail therapy, and marvelled at the massive aquarium teeming with vibrant marine life.

While at the Dubai Mall, I also experienced the mesmerising Dubai Fountain show. The synchrony of water, light and music created an unforgettable spectacle, an enchanting performance that lingered in my mind long after the final splash.

Another day, I visited City Walk, brimming with chic boutiques and eye-catching street art. I lost myself in the colours of the art installations and enjoyed a leisurely meal at one of the trendy cafés. Nearby, the Green Planet, an extraordinary indoor rainforest, invited exploration among its lush greenery and exotic wildlife. It was a refreshing change of pace, showcasing the diversity of ecosystems right in the heart of the city.

When evening approached, I made my way to the Dubai Opera House for an enriching cultural experience. The performances held there were world-class, each one a captivating expression of artistry and creativity. LAST MOMENTS OF BLISS: After several

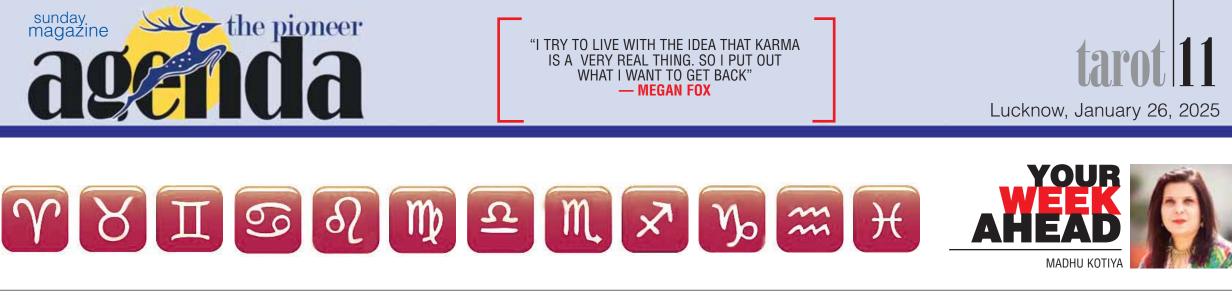
exhilarating days of exploration, it was time to wrap up my Dubai adventure. Late check-out at 2 PM

was a blessing, allowing me to linger longer in this oasis before heading out. However, I extended my experience with a last-minute visit to the Plaza Premium Lounge at the airport, a tranquil haven before my departure.

As I settled into the lounge's plush seating, the welcoming ambience provided the perfect setting to reflect on my unforgettable trip. I treated myself to gourmet snacks and beverages, relishing the peaceful environment. The lounge's modern décor and views of the airport buzz were a gentle reminder of the journeys that lay ahead.

As I bid farewell to Dubai, I took one last glance at the cityscape. In my time at Rove City Walk, I discovered more than just a temporary home; I found a vibrant community hub that embodies the essence of Dubai while delivering comfort and convenience. Every moment spent here was a reminder of why I love exploring the world, one hotel at a time.

- Akanksha Dean is an independent food & amp; travel writer, a chef and a catalyst and is the first Indian to have trained at Osteria Francescana, in Modena, Italy, rated as the world's best restaurant in the World's 50 Best Restaurants, in 2016 and 2018 and currently in the Best of The Best Category





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

This week, you may find yourself enveloped in a whirlwind of

into a flurry of activities centered around hospitality. Your family

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.

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

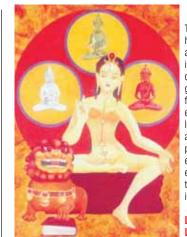
improvement. However, as the week draws to a close, stay vioilant. Tensions could surface, potentially straining a close

You'll receive ample support and affection from elder family

social engagements as you play host to guests, drawing you

and friends will seek your company, filling your days with

TAURUS April 20-May 20



LEO July 23-Aug 22



Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Purple Lucky day Wednesday

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 quide 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

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22



GEMINI May 21-June 20

Lucky day Friday

relationship and impacting your well-being.

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour Maroon

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 ourney. 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



CANCER June 21-July 22 This week you may find yourself wrestling with internal



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

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week centers on aligning your intentions with your actions,



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

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

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

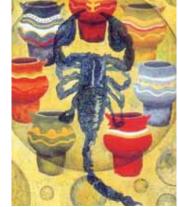


PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Often, in the pursuit of our desires, we may overlook the

conflicts that disrupt your sleep and peace of mind. Concern 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



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

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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Seerat Kaur Marwaha

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

nome relationships feel like a gentle breeze, soothing and Seffortless, 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

Soul Connections — Karmic Ties

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 selfworth. 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 sacral 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*

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

PTI MELBOURNE

adison 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. 1ranked 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.

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 thirdmost 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

ndian left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh was on

Year 2024 for his influential

role in the team's World Cup

title triumph, which cemented his reputation as one of the

leading short format bowlers. The 25-year-old took 36

wickets in 18 matches last

Arshdeep

vear.

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 volley, dropping her racket after missing an overhead, slapping her 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, 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

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, while trailing on the scoreboard, kicking a ball after netting a last forehand winner.

Arshdeep named ICC Men's PTI 📕 DUBAI Saturday crowned the ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the

Gukesh holds Abdusattorov; Praggnanandhaa stays in lead

PTI VIJK 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 round-robin 14-players 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 vear. P Harikrishna, Alexey Fedoseev of Slovenia share the

distance of the leaders. Gukesh held his ground in a challenging endgame against

He was also named in the ICC Abdusattorov, escaping with a T20I Team of the Year 2024 earlier in the day alongside draw after 64 moves. The game began with the Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah Italian Opening, leading to an and Hardik Pandya. equal middlegame. In the T20 World Cup in the

However, as complications Americas, arose, Abdusattorov seized a showcased his mastery in both persistent advantage and handled the position skillfully. powerplay and death bowling and ended the tournament as In the endgame, Gukesh was forced to concede a pawn, and the joint highest wicket-taker forced to concede a pawn, and the situation worsened when Abdusattorov sacrificed his scalps at an average of 12.64 knight for three pawns, putting across eight matches. the Indian under significant His standout performance was pressure. Despite being in a difficult position, Gukesh once again showcased his defensive one of the major factors behind India's campaign resilience, capitalising on an inaccuracy by his opponent to salvage a hard-fought draw.

culminating in a dramatic seven-run victory over South Africa in the final in Barbados. Sarana of Serbia and Vladimir Praggnanandhaa tried to make In the final, he claimed 2/20, foray with white pieces dismissing South African



partnership by removing Quinton de Kock during the middle overs.

Tasked with bowling the penultimate over, Arshdeep conceded just four runs, setting the stage for Hardik Pandya to seal the win.

T20I Cricketer of the Year

A Stellar Year

Arshdeep's T20I record in 2024 further underscores his dominance – 36 wickets in 18 matches at an average of 15.31 and an economy rate of 7.49. His strike rate of 10.80 was a testament to his wicket-taking prowess, especially given his challenging role in the powerplay and at the death. Only four players in the world took more T20I wickets than

Hasaranga (38), UAE's Junaid Siddique (40) and Hong Kong's Ehsan Khan (46) – with all four playing more matches. Of those bowlers, only Hasaranga featured for a full-member nation.

His best figures of the year, 4/9, came against the USA during the World Cup group stage, a performance emblematic of his brilliance on varied surfaces.

With 97 scalps, Arshdeep is now the highest wicket-taker in the format for India. Since his international debut in 2022, Arshdeep has steadily

risen as one of India's most reliable pacers. Arshdeep had a number of impressive displays in the

during the T20 World Cup group stage, bagging remarkable returns of 4/9 in his four overs.

Arshdeep's But most significant performance of the year came on the biggest stage of all, as he played a huge part in helping India successfully defend their total of 176 in the final in Barbados.

Excellent with the new ball up top, Arshdeep struck in the powerplay to have the dangerous South African skipper Markram caught behind in just the third over. And when India were in need of a wicket in the middle overs it was Arshdeep that provided the breakthrough, dismissing a set Quinton de Kock when the Proteas looked to be in control of the chase.

India's collective effort at the death was astonishing as South Africa pulled up seven runs short of their target, and Arshdeep played a huge role in that, returning to the attack to bowl the penultimate over with South Africa requiring 20 from 12 deliveries.

Arshdeep delivered a nearperfect death over under the greatest pressure, conceding just four runs to leave Pandya with 16 runs to defend in the

Sinner plays Zverev in the men's final PTI MELBOURNE

It's not often that a man is able to follow up his first Grand Slam title by repeating as the champion at the same tournament a year later, which is what Jannik Sinner will be trying to do Sunday when he faces Alexander Zverev in the Australian Open final.

The last time it happened was nearly 20 years ago: Rafael Nadal accomplished that sort of repeat at the 2005 and 2006 French Opens. He turned out OK.

For the No. 1-ranked Sinner, the past year also included the doping case that is still unresolved. He tested positive for a trace amount of an anabolic steroid twice in March, which didn't become public until his exoneration was announced shortly before the start of play at the U.S. Open — which he won. There is a hearing in the World Anti-Doping Agency's appeal scheduled in April.

'He finds playing tennis matches to be his safe place. That's where he can go and do his thing and feel like this is what he knows, this is what he understands, what is what he's good at. It become a home for him to step on to the court and play tennis," said one of Sinner's two coaches, Darren Cahill, who will leave the team after this season.

'There's been a lot of pressure around him for the last nine months now, since April last year. He deals with it as well as anybody that I've ever seen deal with pressure," Cahill said.

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PTI DUBAI

fourth spot on 3.5 points each against Wei Yi out of a Ruy captain Aiden Markram early and breaking a threatening

Arshdeep in a calendar year -

Saudi Arabia's Usman Najeeb year, not least when he ripped final over, a job that he (38), Sri Lanka's Wanindu through the USA in New York spectacularly did.



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Rohit Sharma was on Saturday named captain of the ICC's T20 International Team of the Year 2024, which was predominantly Indian in its composition thanks to the side's memorable World Cup triumph in the format. The other Indian members of the all-star XI were pace the all-star XI were pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah,

who also featured in the ICC's Test Team of the Year, allrounder Hardik Pandya and left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh.

378 runs in 11 matches at an impressive average of 42.00 and a strike rate of over 160. Rohit played a pivotal role in India's triumphant T20 World Cup campaign in the USA and West Indies, with three

stage. "His astute leadership was instrumental in guiding a young Indian side through high-pressure situations, cementing his legacy as one of



the line-up were Australian marauder Travis Head, England's Phil Salt, Pakistan's Babar Azam, West Indies' Nicholas Pooran, Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza, Afghanistan's Rashid Khan, and Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga. Rohit the Test captain and

Test batter has been under considerable pressure in the past few months owing to a series of debacles for the team in the shorter formats remain

The standout performers India's greatest T20I captains," from other nations to make the ICC stated in a tribute to the 37-year-old, who was recently forced to show up in domestic red-ball games to reignite his Test career.

Likewise, Pandya reaffirmed his stature as one of the world's finest all-rounders, playing a crucial role in India's successful campaign. In 17 matches, he scored 352 runs and claimed 16 wickets, finishing as the top-ranked ICC men's T20I all-rounder. as well as him personally. But the 37-year-old's credentials came in the T20 World Cup final against South Africa, where he defended 16 runs in strong. where he defended 16 runs in In T20 Internationals, Rohit had an unforgettable 2024, title victory. His best bowling for opposition batters.

Bumrah has exemplified His lethal yorkers and impeccable control at the perfection in Indian cricket this past season across formats and T20 was no death overs played a pivotal role in India's success, and his different. He led India's bowling attack and claimed performances earned him a

Year. The winner of that honour

will be unveiled in the next three days. Young left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh emerged as India's most

nomination for the Sir prolific wicket-taker in 2024, Garfield Sobers Trophy as scalping 36 wickets in 18 ICC Men's Cricketer of the matches at an average of matches at an average of 13.50.

Arshdeep's ability to swing the ball early and deliver pinpoint yorkers in the death overs made him indispensable to the Indian squad.

