PUBLISHED FROM

Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Himachal and Jammu

The Sikh Times www.thesikhtimes.in

VISIT: Email:sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

Vol. 16 No. 220

RNI NO. DELENG/2008/25465

New Delhi, Saturday, 21 December 2024

National Daily

sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

India registers 'strong protest' with Dhaka over remarks by Bangladesh leader

New Delhi, Dec 20: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday that India lodged a "strong protest" with Dhaka over controversial statements made by a key aide of Bangladesh's interim government, Mahfuj Alam. Cautioning leaders in the neigh-



bouring country, MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said New Delhi wants to "remind all concerned to be mindful of their public comments". Jaiswal reiterated India's expression of interest in fostering relations with the interim government of Bangladesh. He said such remarks "underline the need for responsibility in public articulation". Ravichandran Ashwin announces retirement! - For more details & latest news, read on here

"We have registered our strong protest on this issue with the Bangladesh side. We understand that the post being referred to has reportedly been taken down. We would like to remind all concerned to be mindful of their public comments. While India has repeatedly signalled interest in fostering relations with

the people and the interim government of Bangladesh, such comments underline the need for responsibility in public articulation," Jaiswal said at a press conference today. In a now-deleted Facebook post, Alam said India should recognise the uprising that forced Sheikh Hasina to resign as the prime minister of Bangladesh, reported. Hasina was forced to resign after facing violent protests against reservations in government jobs. She fled Dhaka in a military plane in August, as mobs threatened her safety in the capital city. After she fled the country, her house was ransacked by mobs. India and Bangladesh's relations have been strained since the interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was formed. New Delhi on Thursday expressed

concern at incidents of violence targeting

Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh

and said the interim government in Dhaka

has the primary responsibility of protecting

their life and liberty.

Maoist menace in Chhattisgarh to end soon: Amit Shah

Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, Dec 20: Siliguri: Union home minister Amit Shah said on Friday that while Bihar and Jharkhand have become Naxal-free, the Maoist menace in Chhattisgarh and the Northeast will soon be eliminated. He was addressing the 61st Raising Day of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) at the Frontier headquarters in Ranidanga, Siliguri, West Bengal. "The SSB played an important role in assisting the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and local police in the anti-Naxalite campaign. After four decades, Bihar and Jharkhand are now Naxal-free. The SSB has bravely taken up guard in Chhattisgarh, and the Naxalite movement is now on the verge of being eradicated," said. Ravichandran Ashwin announces retirement! - For more details & latest news, read on here He mentioned that in the past seven years, over 600 Maoists have been arrested in the region, over 15 killed, and many others have surrendered. Referring to the Siliguri corridor, often called the "chickenneck" area, Shah said, "The Siliguri corridor is very important in eastern India. The corridor security along the borders with Nepal and crucial route that connects the Northeast with



the rest of India. The SSB's presence in such a region has provided the entire country with assurance and security." Shah praised the role of the SSB in securing the 2,450 km long Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders. "The country's home minister is not at all worried about

between the Mahananda and Teesta rivers is a Bhutan, because my SSB jawans are standing guard there," Shah said. The SSB has success-

fully removed over 1,100 cases of encroachment on no-man's land along the Nepal border, he added. Speaking about how the border guarding agency have controlled the smuggling of drugs, weapons, forest produce, wildlife, and fake currency with great efficiency, Shah said, "Over 4,000 smugglers were arrested in the past year, and 16,000 kg of drugs, 208 weapons, and large caches of ammunition were seized," Shah said. He also added that the SSB had apprehended 183 human traffickers and rescued 301 victims, including 231 girls. "This is a time to once again vow to bring all antinational elements to justice and end all anti-national activities along the borders

of our friendly nations (Nepal and Bhutan)," the minister said. In the past 61 years, the SSB has been awarded four Padma Shris, one Kirti Chakra, six Shaurya Chakras, two Rashtrapati Veerta Padaks, 25 Police Veerta Padaks, and 35 Veerta Padaks, Shah said during the program.

SP's Sambhal MP fined Rs 1.91 crore, electricity cut off at residence for power theft

ST Correspondent

Lucknow, Dec.20: Electricity Department has imposed a fine of Rs 1.91 crore on Lok Sabha MP from Sambhal Zia Ur Rehman and also disconnected the electricity supply to his residence for alleged power theft at his residence, an official said on Friday. The development follows a police case registered on Thursday against the Samajwadi Party MP under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003, for theft of electricity. His father Mamlukur Rehman Barq was also booked for allegedly threatening officials during the inspection at their residence in Deepa Sarai area, they said. "An electricity inspection drive underway in



Sambhal even today. A fine of Rs 1.91 crore has been imposed on the MP by the Electricity department and the power supply to his residence has been disconnected," Sambhal Superintending Engineer Vinod Kumar told. According to the FIR lodged by the Electricity Department, an inspection team found evidence of electricity theft by bypassing the meter and confirmed illegal power use. The inspection was conducted on Thursday morning amid heavy security at the MP's residence. Zia Ur Rehman is among those booked in connection with the November 24 violence in which four locals died in a clash with security personnel during a court-ordered survey of the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid in the city's Kot Garvi area. Superintendent of Police (SP) (Sambhal) Krishna Kumar Bishnoi had earlier told reporters that at 7.30 am on Thursday electricity department's Santosh Tripathi was tasked with checking power equipment in Deepa Sarai area. During the inspection at the MP's residence, Mamlukur Rehman Barq abused engineers V K Gangal and Ajay Kumar Sharma and obstructed government work, he said. The SP said Barq told the engineer that "the dispensation will change and we will ruin you". The incident has been video recorded by the electricity department.

Delhi HC to hear Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam pleas on Jan 7

New Delhi, Dec.20: The Delhi High Court will on January 7, 2025, hear the bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others accused in a UAPA case connected to February 2020 riots. A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur deferred the hearing after the Delhi police counsel said the case would be argued by additional solicitor general S V Raju, who was unavailable on Friday. "How do we adjourn bail matters like this? Last time also these were heard by a bench and released," the bench said. The court said it would hear the matter on the very first of its re-opening post the winter break. The senior counsel for Khalid Saifi said the adjournment couldn't be at the cost of the accused, adding, "He has been in custody for almost five years." Khalid, Imam and several others were booked under the antiterror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and provisions of the IPC for allegedly being the "masterminds" of the February 2020 riots, which left 53 people dead and over 700 injured. The violence took place during the protests against the CAA and NRC. They have sought bail from the court on the grounds of long period of incarceration and parity with other co-accused

Kejriwal accuses BJP of calling Purvanchalis as Rohingyas, deleting their votes

Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, Dec.20: AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal on Friday accused BJP chief JP Nadda of equating Purvanchalis with Rohingyas and Bangladeshi people, and admitting deletion of their votes in Delhi ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls. Taking a dig at the BJP for not announcing its chief ministerial face for the Delhi Assembly polls due in February, Kejriwal called the saffron party a "wedding party without groom". "They should tell the name. Its a right of the people to know, he said addressing a press conference here. Kejriwal

accused the BJP of hatching a conspiracy to get the names of Purvanchalis in Delhi deleted from the voters list because they supported the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the elections. "BJP presParliament deletion of names of Purvanchalis,

Rohingyas

Bangladeshis. The Purvanchalis are being called Rohingyas. How can those who came from UP and Bihar to Delhi and were settled here for 30-40 years be called as Rohingya or Bangladeshi?" he

ident JP Nadda openly admitted in asked. Kejriwal said the AAP workers will go door to door across Delhi to tell and the Purvnachali people about the BJP's

"conspiracy". AAP's Rajya Sabha MP from Delhi and a Purvanchali face of the party, Sanjay Singh, will undertake 'Ratri Pravas" (night stays) at Purvanchali dominated areas of the city to expose the BJP's "well planned conspiracy", he said. The issue of deletion of votes in Delhi was raised in Parliament by Singh earlier this week. Nadda claimed the names of Bangladeshis and Rohingyas are being removed from the voters' list following the process laid down in the Constitution and asked the AAP if it was wining with their votes. Singh

claimed that BJP workers had submitted applications to delete the names of Hindu voters under false pretences of labelling them as "Rohingyas" and "Bangladeshi infiltrators".

Fadnavis announces judicial probes into Parbhani violence, Beed sarpanch murder

Tejinder Kaur Babbar

Mumbai, Dec. 20: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday announced judicial probes into the Parbhani violence and the murder of village head Santosh Deshmukh in Beed district. The state will also provide financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of Deshmukh and Somnath Suryawanshi, who died after his arrest in connection with the violence in Parbhani over the alleged desecration of a replica of the Constitution, he said. Announcing the transfer of Beed Superintendent of Police, the CM said the police were found to be lax. Fadnavis said the abduction and murder of Deshmukh, sarpanch of Massajog village, is already being probed by a special investigation team (SIT) under an IG-rank officer. In addition to that, a judicial probe will be done within three to six months, he said. The CM assured the

House that those responsible for "unleash-

ing" anarchy in Beed district would be punished irrespective of their political links. Sharing the details tied to the sarpanch murder, Fadnavis said on December 6, Ashok Ghule, Sudarshan



an energy project site in Beed district and beat up the watchman Amardeep Sonawane and project manager Shivaji Thopte. Deshmukh was informed about

neighbouring village, he said. Fadnavis said that on December 9, Deshmukh's vehicle was intercepted by a black Scorpio and another car at a toll naka. He was pulled out and bundled into the Scorpio, the CM told the House. Deshmukh was

mercilessly thrashed inside the car, taken out and again beaten up. "The accused fled after realising that Deshmukh had died," he said. Fadnavis said Deshmukh's brother was in touch with one Vishnu Chate pleading with him to let go of the sarpanch. Chate was the former tehsil chief of NCP in Beed district. Before Deshmukh's murder, manager Thopte of the energy company had filed a police complaint on November 29 alleging an extor-

tion bid, he said. The complaint said that one Walmik Karad talked over the phone to Sunil Shinde and Chate when they were present at the company's office in Massajog village. Karad demanded that

the company stop the work. That day, Sudarshan Ghule also came to the office and asked the company official to stop work. Project manager Thopte was subsequently called to Parli, where Karad threatened and asked him to either stop the work or pay Rs 2 crore, Fadnavis said. "The link between the extortion and murder is being probed. I assure the House that the mastermind in the case will be brought to book. If Walmik Karad's involvement in the murder is established, action would be taken. His involvement in the extortion case has been proved," said the CM. While Deshmukh was a Maratha, some of the accused including Chate belonged to the Other Backward Classes. This had given a caste angle to the incident, especially against the backdrop of the Maratha quota agitation and opposition by OBCs to it. All those directly and indirectly involved in these criminal activities in Beed district will be booked under MCOCA (Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act), he said.

Former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala dies

Naresh Malhotra

Gurugram, Dec.20: Indian National Lok Dal president and five-time Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala died here on

Friday at the age of 89. Chautala, who was former deputy prime minister Devi Lal's son, suffered a cardiac arrest at his house here and was immediately rushed to a hospital but could not be saved, a party spokesperson told. He breathed his last at around 12 noon in Medanta hospital, a senior police officer said. Chautala, who came from a prominent political family in Haryana and was face of a prominent regional outfit, had been facing age-related health issues in the recent past. He is survived by two sons and three daughters. His wife Sneh Lata had passed away over five years ago. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini were

among a host of leaders who condoled the demise of Chautala. Expressing grief, Modi said on X, "He (Chautala) was active in the state politics for many years and strove constantly to advance the work of Devi Lal." Saini said the demise of the INLD supremo is extremely sad. "My humble tribute to him. He served the state and society throughout his life. This is an irreparable loss for the politics of the country and Haryana state," Saini said



on X. Former chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda recalled that when Chautala was the chief minister, he was the Leader of Opposition in the Haryana assembly. Chautala served the people of the state. There are many good memories with him, he said, adding that he was like his elder brother. Congress leader Randeep Singh Hooda and Kumari Seja also condoled the death of Chautala. Born on January 1

1935, Om Prakash Chautala was the eldest of the five children of former deputy prime minister Chaudhary Devi Lal. Chautala left studies after primary education. In 2013, when Chautala was lodged in Tihar Jail in connection with the teacher recruitment scam, he passed the class 10 and then class 12 examination at the age of 82. He was jailed in 2013 in connection with the teacher recruitment scam case and released in 2021. Chautala, his son Ajay Chautala, and 53 others, including IAS officer Sanjiv Kumar, were convicted and sentenced in the case of illegal recruitment of 3,206 junior basic teachers in 2000. The former Haryana chief minister's

younger son Abhay Singh Chautala is a senior leader of the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) while elder one Ajay Singh Chautala, a former MP, heads the Jannayak Janta Party, which was born after a vertical split in the party in December 2018 after a

We have let the people of India down': Shashi Tharoor

New Delhi, Dec 20: Referring to the showdown between Congress and the BJP over BR Ambedkar, MP Shashi Tharoor stated that the Parliament has failed to fulfil

as Parliament was starting. Sadly, most of this time has been wasted in disruption," he told news agency. Ravichandran Ashwin announces retirement! - For more details & latest news, read on here He noted that while constructive work was



ple down. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor speaks to the media at Parliament during the Winter Session "Most of our MPs are disappointed. I think that there are a lot of major issues to be discussed in our country, including unemployment, price rise, Manipur, Sambhal violence broke out just

done in parliamentary committees, constant disruption in parliamentary proceedings had prevented the house from functioning effectively. Tharoor also hoped that the central government would reach out to the opposition and come to an understanding to allow the smooth operation of parliamentary discussions. "To my mind, Parliament is a forum for debate, discussion, and disagreements certainly but not for disruption.

There was an agreement reached between the government and the opposition in the first week that the opposition could protest outside but inside work would continue. It went on for 2-3 days. But thereafter, we ended up once again with a complete breakdown," the MP said.

Coal bunker at Mettur thermal plant crashes, one dead, five rescued

COIMBATORE. A coal bunker at Mettur Thermal Power Plant in Salem collapsed on Thursday evening, burying a group of workers under more than 500 tonnes of debris and coal. After an hour-long operation, five workers were rescued alive, while one was found dead.

Search operation is under way to locate others who may have been trapped inside. The bunker or storage container had 500 tonnes of coal load, sources said. Though these bunkers can handle a coal load of up to 625 tonnes, their load-handling capacity decreases with time and all these structures are nearly 30 years old, sources said. Superintendent of Police Gautam Goyal told TNIE "Around seven to eight people were caught under the debris. Five of them were rescued alive. One worker P Venkatesh (50) of Mettur was found dead. The search operation is on to rescue others."The coalfired plant comes under the control of Tangedco. It has four units and each unit produces 210 megawatts (MW) of electricity every day. Coal is crushed in the grinding mill on the ground floor and sent to a 52m high bunker through an 18m feeder. Each unit has five bunkers named from A to E.

On Thursday, around 5 pm, when a group of workers were at the grinding mill, the third bunker (D) collapsed allegedly unable to hold the weight after it was loaded with around 500 tonnes of coal. The collapsing bunker damaged the feeder and fell on the grinding mill where the workers were working. Production was stopped immediately. Police and fire and rescue services teams rushed to the spot. Five workers, M Gowtham (20), A Thiruchendur Murugan (28), C Sreenivasan (44), C Srikanth (24) and P Manoj (27), were rescued and taken to Mettur Government Hospital in ambulances. Manoj was later referred to Government Mohan Kumaramangalam Medical College Hospital in Salem.

Two held for facilitating dumping of Kerala biomedical waste in Nellai

TIRUNELVELI. Two agents, who were allegedly involved in facilitating the dumping of biomedical and other waste from Kerala in Tirunelveli's Kodaganallur, Palavoor and Kondanagaram villages, were arrested by the Suthamalli police on Thursday. The

accused were identified as Manohar (51) and Mayandi (42), residents of Suthamalli in Tirunelveli district. Superintendent of Police N Silambarasan confirmed the arrests. "We are tracing the other accused and are planning to bust the entire chain of operations," he said.

Meanwhile, officials and functionaries of various political parties continued to visit the dumping sites in the three

villages for the third consecutive day.Leader of Opposition and AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami strongly condemned the dumping of Kerala waste in Tamil Nadu. He said Chief Minister M K Stalin is only interested in shaking hands with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and holding photo shoots. "He is a chief minister who is not even brave enough to oppose the dumping of waste from a

neighbouring state in Tamil Nadu," Palaniswami posted on X.NTK leader Seeman also condemned the Kerala government for dumping waste in Tamil Nadu. In a post on X, he stated that this practice continues despite strong opposition from the Madras High Court



and the National Green Tribunal. "Kerala is vigilant in protecting its natural resources but dumps its waste in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu farmers send vegetables and other essentials to Kerala. Is it fair for Kerala to send its waste to Tamil Nadu?" he asked.

EPS: Remove waste immediately, TN not a dustbin

Chennai: AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami on Thursday

strongly condemned the dumping of medical waste from Kerala in the border districts of Tamil Nadu. In his post on X handle, Palaniswami said these waste have been dumped in Kallur, Pazhavur and some other places in Tirunelveli district. "Tamil Nadu is not a dustbin.

Since these medical waste will spread communicable diseases, all these should be removed immediately and firm steps should be taken to prevent dumping of medical waste in our state," Palaniswami said.

Minister: TN turned dumpyard during AIADMK

Chennai: Minister for Finance and Environment and Climate Change Thangam Thennarasu alleged TN had become a dumpyard for Kerala during the AIADMK regime. He was

responding Palaniswami's criticism. The minister said the dumping of waste from Kerala has been greatly avoided through stringent surveillance along the border after the present DMK government came to power in 2021. He added action is being taken on a few unexpected incidents and those committing the crime are being punished as per law. He also blamed Palaniswami for desperately trying to do politics out of any issue.

'Not waqf, Munambam land can be sold'

KOCHI. In a curious move debunking the Waqf Board's claim, Farook College, Kozhikode, has said that Munambam land is not classified as waqf property, and the college received it through a gift deed.Members of the college management committee stated this on Thursday before Justice C N Ramachandran Nair, chairman of the judicial commission appointed by Kerala government to investigate Munambam land issue and submit a report. They asserted that since the property was not waqf, the college had every right to sell the land. The college management committee members, accompanied by their lawyers, met the judicial commission chairman and explained their stance on the issue. The management committee's position is contrary to the Waqf Board's claim that the Munambam land is waqf property.

Commission to visit Munambam on January 4

When contacted, the management committee members preferred not to make any comment, but reliable sources confirmed the visit. Till date, Farook College authorities have been maintaining that the Munambam land issue was sub-judice and they would make their stance public only after the



judicial procedures were over. The public hearing by the commission is expected to begin in January. The commission has already issued notices to residents in Munambam, Waqf Samrakshana Samithi, the State Waqf Board, the state government, religious institutions, private establishments in Munambam including hotels, resorts and nursery, asking them to submit relevant documents concerning the land within two weeks."Most of the people who were sent notice have submitted their statements. But the Waqf Board and the state government are yet to do it. The commission will visit Munambam to listen to the residents at a meeting to be held at the Munambam Church Parish Hall on January 4 from 10 am. The hearing will be held at the Ernakulam Collectorate Hall," said a reliable source.

The land dispute in Munambam started when the State Waqf Board asserted ownership of land that was reportedly donated to Farook College in Kozhikode by Siddique Sait in 1950. Residents of Munambam, who purchased the land before the introduction of the Waqf Act, argue that they legally acquired the land from the college management, which was not classified as Waqf property at that time. By 2022, these families faced difficulties in paying land taxes at the village office, but the state government intervened and enabled the payment temporarily. However, the Waqf protection council challenged this decision, leading to a legal dispute.

Telangana HC hears petition by KTR to quash corruption case

The complaint accuses the petitioner and two government officials of conspiring to cause wrongful loss to the state exchequer and gain for third parties.

HYDERABAD. Justice N.V. Shravan Kumar of the Telangana High Court granted permission to hear a lunch motion petition filed by Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao (KTR), MLA and Working President of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS). The petition seeks the quashing of proceedings in Crime No.12/RCO-CIU ACB-2024, registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code. The court scheduled the hearing for after 2:45 PM on Friday. The petitioner, named as Accused No. 1 in the case, is alleged to have been involved in irregularities concerning the conduct of Formula E Races in Hyderabad

The prosecution has invoked Section A tripartite agreement was executed on 13(1)(a) read with 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 409 read with 120B of the IPC.According to the



prosecution, the case stems from a complaint by M. Dana Kishore, Principal Secretary of Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD), to the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), alleging procedural violations and financial

October 25, 2022, between Formula E Operations Ltd. (a UK-based company), the MA&UD Department of Telangana,

and ACE Nxt Gen Private Limited for conducting Formula E Races from seasons 9 to 12 in Hyderabad. The 3. Payments were processed even after the Telangana government's role was confined to building the race track and providing civic amenities.

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) reportedly incurred ?12 crore for the inaugural event held on February 11, 2023. However, the subsequent agreement saw HMDA assume the role of promoter and host, with estimated expenditures rising to ?110 crore for the event and ?50 crore for ancillary

The prosecution alleges that:

HMDA transferred payments totaling over ?54.88 crore to Formula E Operations Ltd. and other entities, without necessary administrative approvals.2. Foreign remittances were made without regulatory clearance, resulting in an additional tax burden of ?8.06 crore.

unilateral termination of the tripartite agreement by Formula E Operations Ltd. on October 27, 2023.4. A new agreement was executed between Formula E Operations and the MA&UD Department during the Model Code of Conduct period, allegedly without the Election Commission's prior approval.

The complaint accuses the petitioner and two government officials of conspiring to cause wrongful loss to the state exchequer and gain for third parties.KTR contends that the allegations are politically motivated and lack merit. The complaint fails to detail any personal pecuniary benefit to the petitioner or substantiate claims of conspiracy with private entities. Moreover, no private party has been named as an accused in the case.

Special court to deal with indiscipline in Syro-Malabar Church over liturgical matters JAGTIAL. Two Grade-8 students from KOCHI. A special court has of Holy Mass came into effect "Such courts should normally

been established at Mount St Thomas, the headquarters of the Syro-Malabar Church, to take action as per ecclesiastical and canonical laws against the indiscipline in the Ernakulam-Angamaly archeparchy over matters of liturgy. The court was established by Major Archbishop Raphael Thattil. According to Canon Law No. 89 for the Eastern Churches, the major archbishop has the right and duty to exercise disciplinary supervision over the clergy. The special court will take disciplinary action in accordance with the law, if orders and warnings are rejected. The uniform method

in the Syro-Malabar Church on November 28, 2021. Despite the efforts of the Pope, the Office for the Eastern Churches, the Syro-Malabar synod, the major archbishop, the apostolic administrator, and the pontifical delegate to implement uniform Holy Mass through doctrine and decree. priests have been showing reluctance comply."Establishment of the special court became necessary as violations continue to sow division among the faithful and create great disquiet in the public," said Syro-Malabar Church spokesperson Fr Antony Vadakekkara.

function in diocesan centres. However, the apostolic administrator had informed the superiors that it was not possible to open the court at the diocesan office in the current situation. Therefore, at the request of Bishop Bosco Puthur and in accordance with the instructions of the Eastern Office in Rome, the major archbishop has established this special court.The court will have the authority to take action as per the canon law against priests, monks and laity of the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese who commit disciplinary violations," he

Snakebite hospitalises two Gurukul students in Jagtial Peddapur Gurukul residential school in Metpalli mandal were reportedly bitten by snakes within 24 hours. The students were rushed to the government area hospital in Korutla town, where they were administered anti-venom injections. Akhil was bitten on Wednesday night, while another student, Yashwith, was attacked on Thursday morning. Doctors confirmed that both students are safe and out of danger. DMHO K Pramod informed that the victims are under observation and will be discharged on Friday. The incident has sparked fear among the school's students. Concerned parents rushed to the school and staged a protest, demanding the institution be relocated to a safer

environment."Suspending staff is not a



solution. Two students have died earlier. and now two others are undergoing treatment. The district administration must find a permanent solution," said a parent, Srinivas. Another parent, Saritha, stated: "There is no proper medical facility for children in the school. When I heard about the incident, I was panicking over my child's safety."District Collector B Satya

Prasad visited the school on Thursday. He assured parents and students that the government would implement measures to enhance safety. The collector directed authorities to maintain clean and hygienic surroundings, clear bushes regularly, and deploy snake catchers on the premises.

Third such incident

This is the third such incident at Peddapur Gurukul Residential School. On August 9, a Grade 6 student, Anirudh, died after severe stomach pain, while two others, Mokshith and Hemant Yadav, were hospitalised with similar complaints. Earlier, on July 27, a Grade 8 student, Ghana Aditya, died due to suspected epileptic fits. During a subsequent sanitation drive, numerous snakes were discovered on the school premises, raising concerns over safety on the campus.

Two gang-rape 15-year-old girl in Sundargarh district, another makes failed bid

ROURKELA. A 15-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by two youths while a third man in his 50s, taking advantage of her precarious situation, unsuccessfully attempted to assault her sexually in Bisra police limits of Sundargarh district.The incident came to light on Thursday after Uditnagar police arrested the three who were known to each other. The two main accused are in the age group of 25 to 30 years while the third is a 55-year-old fish vendor. The victim, who belongs of Uditnagar police limits of Rourkela, had left home on Tuesday over some

waiting at Rourkela railway station the same evening, one of the accused befriended her and on the pretext of offering help, took her to Bisra where the crime was committed, police said. She was kept at the house of the fish vendor who on Thursday afternoon dropped her at Rourkela possibly fearing police action.

Rourkela SP Nitesh Wadhwni said the girl had left home on Tuesday but her family lodged a missing person complaint on Wednesday night since she had, on a previous occasion too, taken off without informing the parents.

family dispute. While she was Uditnagar police began the search from the railway station and collected clues about her whereabouts. However, the fish vendor on Thursday afternoon dropped her at Rourkela. As soon as police got wind of her return, it arrested one culprit from Rourkela and the other two from Bisra while they were preparing to escape, Wadhwani said. As per preliminary investigation, one of the accused who befriended the victim at the railway station took the girl to the house of the fish vendor at Bisra where the second youth joined him.

1.4L suspicious plots registered for paddy sale: Satellite survey CUTTACK. The satellite survey conducted by Odisha Space Application Centre (ORSAC) has detected 1,44,734 suspicious plots

registered by farmers for selling kharif paddy at minimum support price (MSP) in Cuttack district. After detection of such plots, the Cooperation department has initiated steps for their physical verification."We have received the report of satellite survey conducted by ORSAC a few days back.

It has detected 1,44,734 suspicious plots. They, however, cannot be termed as fake unless verified physically to ascertain their genuineness," said deputy registrar of cooperative societies(DRCS), Cuttack, Supriya Swain. As many as 393 surveyors



have been engaged for physical verification of the plots in 1,850 revenue villages under 15 tehsils of Cuttack district. The field visits have already started, said Swain.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published Owned by Simmi Babbar N - 31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar Delhi-110009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing Press, A-4/A-144, Tronica City (Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) Corporate Office:

5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, Press Area, ITO, New Delhi Editor-in-Chief

Gurcharan Singh Babbar Mob: 9654077232, 9971359517 Website: www.thesikhtimes.in Email: sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465 Legal Advisors:

Advocate Mohd. Sajid Advocate Dr. A.P.Singh Advocate Manish Sharma Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

News box

Orbital Rail's 90km eastern corridor project on UP table

Ghaziabad.In its initial assessment for the Eastern Orbital Rail project, the Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation (HRIDC) has suggested constructing this corridor within the boundary of EPE, or beyond it.HRIDC on Thursday presented the draft feasibility report to Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA), the designated coordinator for the project, along with officials of NCR Planning Cell, UP's industrial development authority UPSIDA and the state's rail transport corporation UPSRTC. The orbital rail project involves building a railway network that will run along the Eastern and Western peripheral expressways – EPE and WPE – in effect, skirting Delhi without crossing the capital. The two expressways,

As builder dues mount to Rs 30cr, Noida seals 27 flats

Noida: Noida Authority has taken strict action against Skytech Construction Pvt Ltd for defaulting on payment dues for its group housing project, Skytech Matrott, located in Sector 76. Despite repeated notices, the builder failed to clear outstanding dues of over Rs 30 crore. Consequently, the Authority sealed 27 unsold flats in the project on the directions of its chief executive officer Lokesh M. Earlier, in September, the Authority sealed five flats in the same project for noncompliance. The developer failed to avail of the state govt's rehabilitation policy for stalled projects and pay 25% of the total revised dues after deducting interest and penal interest for the two-year Covid-19 relief period between April 2020 and March 2022.

A 20,900-square-metre group housing plot was allotted to Skytech on March 3, 2010, with the lease deed executed on July 30 that year. The developer had launched the Skytech Matrott project, comprising over 700 apartments, but failed to clear dues against the plot.

Under the state's rehabilitation policy issued in Dec 2023, developers were given the option to settle their dues. Skytech initially deposited Rs 1 crore but failed to pay the remaining amount despite multiple notices issued on May 27, July 8, and August 14 this year.

Of the 716 sanctioned units in Matrott, 474 units were registered. This month, the Authority also cancelled the allotment of a 14,000-square-metre plot to Docile Buildtech Pvt Ltd, a subsidiary of Logix Group, in Sector 143 over non-payment of Rs 130 crore dues.

Noida, Gzb see rise in diabetes, cardiac & respiratory cases amid cold & pollution

Ghaziabad/Noida. Due to cold waves and rising pollution levels over the past four days, hospitals reported a sharp rise in patients, particularly those with diabetes, hypertension, and respiratory illnesses. Doctors said the increase in cardiac and diabetic patients is due to decreased physical activities in winter, less water intake, and severe pollution exposure.Doctors at MMG Hospital in Ghaziabad maintained that there were at least 750 cases of diabetes and cardiac issues in the last four days, alongside 500 respiratory cases. Noida hospitals faced a similar situation, with over 500 daily respiratory cases showing symptoms like itchy eyes, runny nose, throat infection, etc., in the past few days.

'We've seen a significant spike in diabetes a complaints, primarily due to the cold wave. Reduced physical activity during winter exacerbates these conditions. Every day, 200-250 patients visit our outpatient department with similar issues," said Rakesh Kumar, chief medical superintendent at MMG Hospital. Doctors emphasised that the drop in physical activity, reduced water intake, and prolonged exposure to severe pollution during winter are key factors behind the surge.Dr Mayank Saxena, additional director of pulmonology at Fortis Hospital in Noida, explained that individuals with diabetes and cardiac issues have weaker immune systems, making them more vulnerable to infections."Pollutants, particularly PM2.5 particles, are so small that they can enter the bloodstream through the lungs and travel to vital organs, impairing their function. For patients with diabetes, hypertension, or other conditions like renal or cardiac diseases, exposure to such pollutants can lead to severe complications, sometimes requiring ICU admission," he added.

A senior doctor at Noida's district hospital said, "Patients with pre-existing conditions such as asthma and bronchitis are the worst affected. In just one outpatient department, around 60 patients reported severe respiratory issues, particularly during early morning and evening hours. Across five OPDs, over 500 cases were recorded in four days.'

Manesar, part of Gurgaon, likely to become a district

Gurgaon. Haryana govt has kicked off major administrative overhaul, with plans to carve out four new districts after municipal elections. Manesar emerges as a prime candidate due to its industrial importance and demographic growth. A committee headed by cabinet minister Krishan Lal Panwar has been tasked with evaluating proposals and submitting its report within two months.anesar, which is now part of Gurgaon, has consistently sought district status. Its substantial industrial and urban development has put pressure on current administrative systems. Being a crucial centre for manufacturing and logistics, the district status could enhance administrative efficiency, infrastructure development and public services.A senior official in Chandigarh said, "For forming a new district, administration officials have been instructed to submit detailed reports on the areas to be included. The report will outline which constituencies, sub-divisions, cities, towns, tehsils, sub-tehsils, block committees and villages will be part of the proposed district." Once these reports are submitted by deputy commissioners, the cabinet sub-committee will deliberate on the matter. After the committee finalises its decision, the report will be forwarded to chief minister for approval.s

Days after couple found hanging in Ghaziabad home, 2 arrested for abetment

Ghaziabad. Police on Thursday arrested two people – a business partner and landlord's relative – on charges of abetment to suicide, two days after a couple died by hanging themselves at their rented house in Shalimar Garden Extension-2.Pankaj Singh (51) and his wife Reena (48) were found by a family member hanging from ceiling fans in two separate rooms of their house on Tuesday.

The suicide appeared to have been planned by the couple, who had sent their 12-yearold son to their grandfather's house in the city hours before hanging themselves. Initial investigation indicated that the couple was burdened with debts exceeding Rs 50 lakh.Police found notes written by Pankaj and Reena, in which they named a dozen people – including the two arrested on Thursday - for threatening them over the loans and cheating them.On Thursday, cops arrested Pankaj's business partner Dhairya Negi, a Ghaziabad resident, and Shyam Singh, a Manipuri living in Delhi who is a relative of the couple's landlord. DCP (Trans-Hindon) Nimish Patil said two FIRs were registered over the case.

One FIR was registered at Shalimar Garden police station against Dhairya Negi, Shyam Singh, Thoo Leutine Chote,



under section 108 (abetment to suicide) of BNS," the DCP said. The other FIR was based on Reena's note, which also names Thoo Leutine Chote, Negi and Harendra Khadkhadi, apart from Rajat Tomar, Prabhat Kumar and Pankaj's ex-wife Meenu, he said. According to the notes, the largest chunk of debt that Pankaj accrued was because a restaurant venture failed to take off in Delhi a few years ago. Dhairya, police said, was involved in that venture. Pankaj said in his note that "Dhairya Negi is the only person who defrauded us, blackmailed us and

threatened to kill me and my family," Pankaj wrote, alleging that Negi took lakhs from him to get his brother bailed out and has an uncle in Delhi Police who protects him. Harendra, Rohit and Sandeep - Pankaj wrote - "extorted lakhs" from him, opened a club and siphoned off his investments, leaving him in a debt he "can't repay" even if he "wanted to". The DCP said that Dhairya told them during interrogation that they had opened a club '4 Quarters' in Delhi's Cross River Mall in Oct 2021."The rent was Rs 4 lakh per month. Due to certain reasons, including Covid-19, the club had

to be closed by Dec and remained shut for about a year, resulting in a rent liability of Rs 48 lakh. Consequently, the partners had to sell the club in 2023 and incurred large losses. To recover from this, Dhairya repeatedly asked Pankaj for money, but he refused to pay," the DCP said. According to police, Pankaj was involved with Vestige, a pyramid scheme marketing firm, but his offices for the company in Ghaziabad also shut down in Nov-Dec 2022. The notes also spoke about troubles the couple faced with their rented apartment. Pankaj mentioned paying Rs 5 lakh to one Madan Lal in 2018 for the house.But after Lal died during the pandemic, the property was bought by Thoo Leutine Chote — a Manipur resident who allegedly harassed him regularly over rent. Chote would frequently send police to pressure the couple to vacate the property, the note alleged."Their relative (Chote's) Shyam Singh, who probably lives near Palam in Delhi, came to threaten me three or four times with some men," Pankaj wrote. Overwhelmed with their situation, Pankaj said in the note that he was "completely broke. "So now, we are taking this step. It's better to die once than to die every day like this," he said.

Gurgaon colleges to switch to hybrid mode as air quality drops

Gurgaon. The administration has directed all institutions of higher education to operate in hybrid mode until Dec 21. This came after school authorities were directed to continue conducting classes for 9th and 11th in hybrid mode until further notice.

The decision is prompted by concerns over the deteriorating air quality as the city recorded an air quality index (AQI) of 355 keeping it in 'very poor' category on Thursday.

The orders direct registrars of all state and private universities, principals of govt colleges, and govt-aided and private colleges in the district to ensure the implementation of the



hybrid mode."Where online mode is possible, classes should be conducted both physically and online. The option to use the online education mode, where available, will be with the

students and their parents," said the order. The move is in line with the implementation of stage IV actions under GRAP.Ajay Kumar, deputy commissioner, said all restrictions under GRAP 4 are being strictly enforced in the district to control the rising pollution levels.On Dec 17, the administration issued a work-from-home advisory for private

institutions while the govt and private schools, except for the 10th and 12th grades, were asked to operate in online

Clear 10k tonnes of demolition waste daily from city, MCG told

Gurgaon. MCG officials have been asked to make arrangements to lift 10,000 tonnes of construction and demolition (C&D) waste daily.In a review meeing of the Solid Waste Environment Exigency Programme (SWEEP), divisional commissioner RC Bidhan told MCG officials ensure registration of vehicles collecting C&D waste area-wise and that their rates be fixed.

"The process of collecting C&D waste from various locations across the city should be accelerated to make the city appear clean as soon as possible. Arrangements should be

Wind speed comes down, city's air quality inches close to 'poor'

Gurgaon.With low wind speeds and a drop in temperature, the city's air quality worsened on Saturday recording an air quality index (AQI) of 198, up from 168 on Friday. While the air quality remained 'moderate' for the fifth time this month, it was just a few points shy of being in the 'poor' category.Of the four monitoring stations in the city, Teri Gram recorded the worst AQI at a 'poor' 218, followed by Sector 51 (213), Gwal Pahari (200) and Vikas Sadan (175).Following the Supreme Court's revoca-

tion of GRAP 4 on Dec 5. the region is currently under GRAP 2, under which residents are advised to limit the use of private vehicles and follow

NAME CHANGE Manoj Kumar S/o Bindeshwar rasad Singh R/o E-90/1, Raj Nagar

2, Palam Colony, South West Delhi, Delhi-110077, Have Changed My Name To Manoj Kumar Singh For All Future Purpose

NAME CHANGE I, Seema Kumari W/o Manoj Kumar Singh R/o E-90/1, Raj Nagar-2, Palam Colony, South West Delhi, Delhi-110077 Have Changed My Name To Seema Singh For All Future Purpose

NAME CHANGE SURENDER SINGH SHAHI S/O PRATAP SINGH SHAHI R/O. 5/209 DAKSHINPURI EXTN NEW DELHI 110062 ,I HAVE CHANGED MY

NAME TO SURENDER SINGH FOR

NAME CHANGE

ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAVNEET GOEL S/O SUNI UMAR GOEL R/O 2510 SECTOR 16, KHERI KALAN (113) FARIDABAD HARYANA - 121002, I have changed my name from NAVNEET TO

NAME CHANGE

I, Satyendra Singh S/o-Budhi Singh Negi R/o F-96B , Janta Garden, Pandav Nagar Delhi -110091 have changed my name from Satyendra Singh to Satender Singh Negi for a uture purposes.

NAME CHANGE

GOVIND RAM SWAMI Father No. 14938921W Rank-NK Name MANOJ KUMAR SWAMI Present residing at VPO-LALASARI, DIDWANA, DIST.NAC DIST-NAGAUR RAJASTHAN-341303 have changed my name from GOVIND RAM SWAMI to GOVINDA RAM for all future purposes, in my son's service record my date of birth wrongly men tioned as 01/07/1950 instead of m correct date of birth as 01/01/1942 Vide Affidavit dated 20/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

guidelines regarding the operation of diesel generators. On Saturday, the city's wind speed plummeted to 3 kmph from 7 kmph the previous day.The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (Safar) predicted that pollution levels in NCR will continue to worsen over the next six days, with AQI expected to reach the 'poor' and 'very poor' categories.Safar also noted that wind speeds below 3 kmph would lead to airborne pollutants remaining suspended in the air, exacerbating the pollution levels. The levels of PM2.5, toxic particles that can penetrate into the lungs and enter the blood-

NAME CHANGE

Naresh Kumar Yadav S/O Rohtas Yadav R/O ,A -114,Naharpur ,Sector-7 Rohini North West , Delhi -110085 have nanged my name to Naresh Yaday for

NAME CHANGE

PUNIT KUMAR JAIN S/O JA JMAR JAIN R/O 1633/116, GANESH PURA TRI NAGAR ONKAR NAGAR DELHI - 110035, I have changed moname from PUNIT JAIN TO PUNIT UMAR JAIN for all future purpose

NAME CHANGE Sushil kumar S/o Ram mehar Singl R/o RZ-75B, Gopal Mandir lane, dabi tension, south west delhi -110045

nave changed my name from Sushi kumar to Sushil kumar nain for all future

NAME CHANGE PARUL VERMA S/o L R VERMA R/o 3, A-Block, Indira Park, Najafgarh South West Delhi. Delhi-110043. have langed the name of my minor aughter TANISHKA VERMA alias

RIYA ROHILLA aged 16 years and

he shall hereafter be known as RIYAROHILLA, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as SHOAIB S/o RAHII No House No. 97, Main Gurgaon Road Near Old Chaupal, Najafgarh, Dindar Pur, South West Delhi, Delhi-110043, nave changed my name and shall here after be known as AARAV. I have hanged my name only, not my religion

NAME CHANGE

VIMAL Mother of No-15424118A ank-HAV. Name-SACHIN SHIVAJI GAWANDE residing at PLOT NO-29, SIDDESHWAR NAGAR, PO-HAR-SOOL. TEHSIL & DIST- CHHATRAP-SAMBHA.II AURANGABAD), MAHARASHTRA-431008 have changed my name from VIMAL to VIMAL SHIVAJI GAVANDE for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrong-ly mentioned as 01/07/1960 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/07/1961 vide Affidavit dated 20/12/2024 before Notary Public. Delhi

stream, also increased. HSPCB said. While the permissible PM2.5 limit is 60 ug/m³, the levels at Teri Gram rose from 123 µg/m³ on Friday to 308 μg/m³ on Saturday. At Sector 51, PM2.5 increased from 264 μg/m³ to 321 µg/m³, while at Vikas Sadan, it went from $148 \text{ µg/m}^3 \text{ to } 220 \text{ µg/m}^3.$ At Gwal Pahari, the level jumped from 130 μg/m³ on Friday to 318 µg/m³ on Saturday. PM2.5 can lead to serious health conditions such as asthma, stroke, and heart and lung diseases. HSPCB officials have pointed out that localised factors, especially dust from unregulated

NAME CHANGE

, ANITA DEVI W/O ASHOK SHARMA R/O RAMTARI, PO: LAI, DIST: PATNA BIHAR - 801112, I have changed my name from ANITA SHARMA TO ANITA DEVI for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE

Dhruv Kumar Sharma S/O Asholumar Sharma R/O 59, Street NO-12 Sarojini Park, Shastri Nagar, Gandh Nagar East Delhi -110031 Have Changed my name to Dhruv Sharm for all future purposes

NAME CHANGE

I, JUHI AGGARWAL W/o ANUBHAV SHUKLA R/O B-53, Jain Mandir Gali, Shakarpur, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, have changed the name of my minor son VEDAANT SHUKLA ed 03 years and he shall hereaft known as NISHANT AGGARW-, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as RAVINDER HARMA alias RAVINDER KUMAF lias RAVINDER SUNGER S/o RAN KUMAR R/o 459, Bhramputra Marke Sector-28, Noida, Gautam Buddh lagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301, hav changed my name and shall hereafte be known as RAVINDER SUNGER, for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE E IT KNOWN THAT MY CLIENT SH

SHOK KUMAR GUPTA S/O SH. BAI, NATH GUPTA, R/O. J-2 190, GALI NO.4, GUPTA COLONY, SANGAM VIHAR, HAMDARD NAGAR, NEW DELHI AADHAR NO. 679079137653 HEREBY SEVERED ALL THEIR RELATION HAS DEBARRED AND DISINHERITED HIS SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW DEEPAK KUMAR GUPTA S/O. SH. ASHOK KUMAR GUPTA AND KAJAL KUMAR W/O. DEEPAK KUMAR GUPTA FROM ALL HIS PROPERTIES, BOTH MOV ABLE AND IMMOVABLE, MY CLIENT HAS NO CONTROL OVER HIS SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, WHO HAVE NO RESPECT AND REGARD FOR MY CLIENT ANY BODY DEAL-ING WITH THEM IN ANY MANNER WILL DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK AND CONSEQUENCES.

ARABINDA NAYAK Advocate Ch. No. 245-A, Lawyer's Chamber Block District Court Complex, Saket, New Delhi-17 construction activities and unpaved roads contribute majorly to the city's poor air quality. "Dust is a primary cause of pollution, and we will take measures to reduce it," said Vijay Chaudhary, the regional officer of HSPCB. Air pollution has become a yearround problem for Delhi-NCR, especially during the winter, when adverse weather conditions trap

NAME CHANGE

pollutants in a toxic haze.

HITRANJAN KUMAR BHATAN PRASAD residence of F 3/6 SECONDFLOOR FLAT NO-202 CHHATTARPUR EXTENSION have hanged my name to CHITARANJAN JMAR for all future purpose

NAME CHANGE AISHA BEGUM W/O MOHE

KHLAQUE SIDDIQUE R/O H NO 31, KHASRA NO-621/3, HABIB COM-POUND, JASSI PURA, GHAZIABAD UP-201001. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AISHA SIDDIQUE FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

NAME CHANGE

Smiriti D/o Krishan Ballabh Pathal R/o H.No-55, Gali No-2, Durga Mata Mandir, Defence Colony, Bhondsi Gurgaon, Haryana-122102 Have Change My Name To Smriti Pathak For All Future Purpose

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, VIDYA SHANKAR JHA S/o NAVEEN JHA R/o 53, A-Block, Gauri Shankar Enclave, Part-1, Prem Nagar-3, Kirari Suleman Nagar, PO: Sultanpuri C-Block, Dist.: North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, declare that name of mine and my minor son have been wrongly written as VIDHYA SHANKAR JHA and SUNNY in my minor son namely SUNNY JHA aged 12 years in his School Record. The actual name of mine and my minor son are VIDYA SHANKAR JHA and SUNNY JHA

Approx. Cost of work

NAME CHANGE Jyoti D/O Krishan Pal Singh R/O Flat IO A-1-1902, Tower A-1, Amarpali Information is given to general public at large that our client Mrs. Ram Roshni W/o Mr. Subhash Chand is

No A-1-1902, Tower A-1, Amarpail Silicon City SEC 76, Noida, Maharishi Nagar , Gautam Budha Nagar UP-201304 Have Changed my name to Jyoti Singh for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

, DHARAMVEER SINGH S/O KIRAN PAL residing at F-13, GHAZIPUR VIL-LAGE, DELHI-110096. Have changed my name to DHARMVEER SINGH for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as SUNIL SINGHAL alias SUNIL KUMAR S/o MANIRAM alias SUNIL KUNIAR SO MANIKAMI R/o A-65, II & III Floor, Near Ram Mandir, Surajmal Vihar Delhi, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SUNIII KI IMAD for all future purposes UNIL KUMAR, for all future purposes

NAME CHANGE

hitherto known as PINKY DEVI D/o KIRPAL RAJAK, and W/o SUNIL BAITHA residing at WZ B-9, Hari Nagar South West Delhi. Delhi-110064, have

NAME CHANGE

Rita Kumari W/o Shailendra Kuma Singh R/o E-90/1, Raj Nagar-2, Palam Colony, South West Delhi, Delhi 110077, Have Changed My Name To eeta Singh For All Future Purpose

NAME CHANGE

SAVITRI DEVI Mother of N I, SAVITRI DEVI MOITIEF OI NO 14938921W Rank-NK Name-MANO. KUMAR SWAMI Presently residing a VPO-LALASARI, TEH-DIDWANA DIST-NAGAUR, RAJASTHAN-341303 have changed my name from SAVITRI DEVI to SAVITRI for all uture purposes, in my son's service ecord my date of birth wrongly me ioned as 01/07/1955 instead of m correct date of birth as 01/01/1950 Vide Affidavit dated 20/12/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

R/o A- 2299, First Floor, Green Field Colony Amar Nagar, Faridabad Haryana 121001. (My Client) had debarred his son Ashwani Bansal from all his movable and immovable properties on 24.12.2019, Now since his son has mended his ways he hereby revokes the debarment and his son shall have all the rights over all the movable and immovable properties DIPESH CHOUDHARY, ADVOCATE

Chamber No 585, Patiala House Court, New Delhi-110001 Phone : 9811628706

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Engineer/Construction/Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi fo and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Two-Packet system

Civil works, permanent way works including Earthwork in filling in embankments and in cutting, supplying and spreading including compaction of blanketing materials, supplying & putting of stone ballast, Extension o LHS, provision of retaining walls etc, service buildings, provision high

level platforms, provision of drainage system, laying & linking of railway track/furn outs and all other permanent way installations etc. all types of dismantling of existing buildings and existing P-Way infrastructures and all other allied works etc. in C/W "Kumbhawas Yard Work in c/with connectivity of DFC with Northern Railway" in the jurisdiction of Dy. Chiel Engineer/Const./Tilak Bridge on Delhi-Rewari Section of Delhi Division. 18 (Eighteen) months Completion of the work

Rs. 49.96 crore only

Seven Thousand Nine Hundred only) Tender may be uploaded up to 11.30 hrs on 15.01.2025 ision of E-tender on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The bilders uning of tender on participate in the e-tender, the Bids of which will be and opening of tender opened at 11.30 hrs on 15.01.2025. The detailed tender's document will be available on IREPS website

Earnest Money to be deposited Rs 2647900.00/- (Rupees Twenty Six lacs Forty

i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 26.12.2024 to 15.01.2025 and bidders will be able to offer their technical and financial bid from 01.01.2025. ender Notice no. - 490-ACS-C-KUMBHAWAS-TKJ Dated 20/12/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE

he owner of Freehold Residential House No. Municipal Corporation 1-1/1005 Part of Plot No. 6 area Influor Part of Plot No. 6 area measuring 48.69 Sq. Yards i.e. 40.89 Sq. Mtrs out of Khasra No. 2695 situated in the Village Asauda, Mohalla Srinagar, Tehsil & District Hapur, U.P. By Virtue of Sale Deed dated 20.10.2023 duly registered at the office of Sub-Registrar-Hapur, U.P. the office of Sub-Registrar-Hapur-II, as Document No. 10034, in Book No. 1, Volume No. 7680 on Pages No. 57-82 on dated 20.10.2023, in the chain documents below mentioned documents below mentioned documents below the control of the chain documents below mentioned documents below mentioned documents below mentioned documents below mentioned documents below the subsection of the control of the c tioned documents not available i.e (1) Original Sale Deed dated 14.09.2005, (2) Original Sale Deed dated 25.02.2010, (3) Original Sale Deed dated 25.02.2010, (3) Original Sale Deed dated 30.01.2013 & (4) Sale Deed dated 18.03.2015 executed by Mrs. Vandana Sodi in favour of Mrs. Varsha Garg W/o Mr. Vijay Kumar Garg & Mr. Vijay Kumar Garg S/o Late Mr. Mahendra Kumar Garg which is duly registered at the office of Sub-Registrar-Hapur-II, as Document No. 1843, in Book No. 1, Volume No. 3915 on Pages No 257-300 on dated 18.03.2015.nov our client is declaring that that an other Person does not have an right over the said property, an Same property sold too be Mrs. Anita Sharma W/o Mr. Rakesh Sharma and same has been finance by AAVAS FINANCIERS LIMITED Branch: Hapur Utta Pradesh. If any person(s) have any bjection(s) or claim(s) with respec to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us with in 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim sha

[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA] Advocat F-211,sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziaba Uttar Pradesh-201010, Contact at 09958871432

PUBLIC NOTICE nformation is given to general pub-c at large that our client Mr. Juga

Kishor Saini S/o Late Mr. Haris Chand is the owner of Freehold Residential Plot No. 58 area meas uring 154.98 Sq. Yards out of Khasra No. 168 situated No. Jawaharganj, Tehsil & District Hapur, Uttar Pradesh. By Virtue of Gift Deed dated 11.12.2024 duly registered as Document No. dul gistered as Document No. 1081 Book No. 1. Volume No. 1422 on Pages No. 211-228, SRO HAPUR on dated 11.12.2024., nov our client is declaring that that another Person does not have an right over the said property, an same property sold too be Mrs Priyanka Sharma W/o Mr. Nitir Sharma and same has beer finance by AAVAS FINANCIERS LIMITED Branch: Hapur, Uttal Pradesh. If any person is having objection right of claim against the said property, contact to unde signed along with supporting docu-ments within 07 days from the date the same to the undersigned in found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

[NAVEEN KUMAR VERMA] Advocat F-211.sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziaba

NAME CHANGE

I, Swati w/o Sushil kumar nain R/o RZ 75B, Gopal Mandir lane, dabri exten sion, south west delhi -110045 have changed my name from Swati to Swa nain for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

NASHRU S/O NIZAM residing at 1387, GALI NO 8-A, VIJAY PARK MAUJPUR, DELHI -110053. Have changed my name to NASROO for al future purpose.

NEWS BOX

Man suspected of killing three people fatally shot by police near Chicago

BERWYN.A man suspected in the fatal shootings of three people in central Illinois was shot and killed by police after opening fire on them in suburban Chicago, authorities said Thursday.Officers in Berwyn responded to a report of a man with a gun around 11:30 p.m. Wednesday. The man ran away and forced his way into a home where he fatally shot two dogs, police said. He then ran into a nearby yard where he refused police commands to stop. The man then shot at Berwyn officers and they returned fire, killing him. The man later was identified as John Lyons, 24, of Westchester, west of Chicago.

Police said he was suspected in the fatal shootings of three people at a home in Mahomet, about 120 miles (190 kilometers) southwest of Chicago. One of the victims, identified Thursday by Champaign County Coroner Laurie Brauer as Sara E. Mason, 26, died at the scene where the three were found about 9:40 p.m. Wednesday. The other two, Janis Mason, 61, and Caleb Mason, 23, were both pronounced dead at a nearby hospital, WCIO-TV reported. A vigil was held for the victims at a local church Thursday evening.

UK Teen Drowns in Reservoir As Friends Mistook Waving For Joke

World A teenager in the UK who did not know how to swim, drowned in a reservoir as his friends thought he was "joking" when he started waving for help, according to a report in The Telegraph. 16-year-old Tyrese Johnson was out with his friends on the last day of the school at Lodge Farm Reservoir, in Netherton, Dudley, in July, earlier this year when the incident took place. A friend said during the inquest hearing that he saw Mr Johnson waving but initially believed it to be a joke with others having a laugh as well. The situation, however, soon turned grim as Mr Johnson disappeared beneath the surface.

As per the group of friends, they had been in the water for under three minutes when Mr Johnson started facing difficulty. The water had been shallow but then the ground below suddenly dropped off "like a cliff edge" into deep water, which led to Mr Johnson's drowning, the friends said at the Black Country coroners court.

The friends desperately tried to pull him out but could not with one brave paddler diving under the surface for 40 minutes. Mr Johsnon's body was only recovered the following day around 11:30 am.

"I could see six or seven lads on the edge of the water three were in the water and it looked like they were having a laugh like lads do," James Birks, the paddler, told the court."Then the tone changed and I realised someone was struggling," added Mr Birks.Mr Birks said he heard people shouting "he's drowning" and paddled over. he dived into the water to the point where Mr Johnson should have been, but the water was muddy."I wish I could have done more to help," Mr Birks added. Tribute from family

In a tribute released by the family, Mr Johnson's parents said their son had been afraid of water and "never wanted to go to swimming lessons or go into the pool when on family holidays".

Early Signs Suggest Trump 2.0 Will Be Bringing The Chaos Back

Washington. Donald Trump still has a month until he becomes US president but he has already displayed his unique capacity to sow confusion and steal headlines with remarks belittling Canada, intimidating the media and torpedoing a budget deal

"We're going to see more chaos in Trump's second term than his first," said Todd Belt, political science professor at George Washington University. "I think what has happened this week is a good indication of what is to come."He added that a Supreme Court ruling that grants presidents sweeping immunity for official acts will give Trump "more of an opportunity to act on his worst impulses."

The Republican has stolen the limelight from outgoing President Joe Biden, who has largely



disappeared from public view in his final weeks in office. On Monday, Trump gave his first news conference since winning the November 5 election, talking to journalists for more than an hour about various topics -- and savoring the attention. "Everyone wants to be my friend," he said when commenting on the visits of various billionaire tech CEOs and other leaders to his Florida residence, which he will leave on January 20 for the White House. He told reporters that he wanted to "straighten out" the press -- something his team has pursued through lawsuits that observers and rights groups worry are signs of escalating censorship tactics. While commenting on a wide gamut of issues, Trump has also shown that he has not changed in his predilection towards delivering vague, sometimes contradictory, messages. Take vaccines, for example. The Republican said that he is a "big believer" in the polio vaccine, but also sowed doubt over a widely debunked link between vaccination and autism. "There's something wrong. And we're going to try finding that," Trump said, noting a rise in autism cases in the United States that experts say is due to changes to diagnostic criteria, increased awareness and better screening.

'Decision to invade Ukraine should have been made earlier': Putin at annual news conference

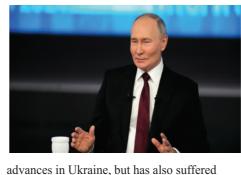
MOSCOW. President Vladimir Putin boasted that his military operation in Ukraine has strengthened Russia and denied that the ouster of key ally Bashar Assad in Syria had hurt Moscow's prestige, as he took questions at his annual news conference and call-in show Thursday.

He used the tightly choreographed event, which lasted about 4 and a half hours, to reinforce his authority and demonstrate a sweeping command of everything from consumer prices to military hardware.

Sending troops into Ukraine in 2022 has boosted Russia's military and economic power, Putin said, adding that if he could do it over, "such a decision should have been made earlier" and Russia could have "prepared for it in advance and more thoroughly.""Russia has become much stronger over the past two or three years because it has become a truly sovereign country," he said. "We are standing firm in terms of economy, we are strengthening our defense potential and our military capability now is the strongest in the world."Putin, who has held power for

nearly a quarter-century and began another six-year term earlier this year, said the military was "advancing toward achieving our goals" in what he calls the special military operation in Ukraine.In response to a question about a new hypersonic ballistic missile that Russia used for the first time last month to strike Ukraine, Putin scoffed at claims by some Western experts that it could be intercepted by NATO's air defences. He mockingly challenged Ukraine's allies to a "high-tech duel," suggesting that Moscow could give advance notice of a strike on Kyiv with the Oreshnik missile and see if the West could protect the city."Let them select a target, possibly in Kyiv, put their air defense assets there and we shall strike it with the Oreshnik," he said with a dry smile. "Let's see what happens."

Speaking on a visit to Brussels, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy responded to Putin's comment by asking, "Do you think it's a sane person?"Putin calls general's killing a security 'blunder' Russia is making steady, if slow,



embarrassing setbacks. On Tuesday, Lt. Gen Igor Kirillov was killed by a bomb planted outside his apartment building in Moscow — a brazen assassination claimed by Ukraine that brought the conflict once again to the streets of the Russian capital.

Putin described Kirillov's killing as a "major blunder" by Russia's security agencies, noting they should learn from it and improve their efficiency. Moscow's troops are also battling Ukrainian forces in the Russian region of Kursk, where they have launched an incursion. Asked when they

would drive the Ukrainians out, Putin said "we will certainly kick them out" but wouldn't say how long it would

In a flourish typical of the marathon news conferences, he asked members of the audience to unfurl a banner presented to him by marines fighting in Kursk as he spoke about Ukraine.Open to talks on Ukraine but reiterates Russia's demandsPutin said he was open to possible talks with

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who has pledged to negotiate a deal to end the conflict in Ukraine.

"If we meet with Mr. Trump, we will have things to discuss," he said, without elaborating. Putin said Russia also is open for compromise in potential peace talks on Ukraine."Politics is the art of compromise," he said. "We have always said that we are ready for both talks and compromises." At the same time, Putin added that the talks should be based on "the situation on the ground" referring to some of the conditions he previously laid out.

Russian Prez Putin Once Again Hails India's Growing Economy Under PM Modi

Moscow. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday once again acknowledged India's growing economic prowess while highlighting his government's continued efforts to keep the overall economic situation in the country normal and stable despite the long and ongoing conflict with Ukraine. "International financial and economic institutions have placed Russia first in Europe in terms of economic volume, purchasing power parity, and fourth in the world. Ahead are China, the United States, and India. We overtook Germany last year and have overtaken Japan this year. But this is not an indicator that we should fall asleep and calm down on.
Of course not," said Putin while
answering questions during his annual press conference in Moscow on Thursday. He mentioned that the Russian economy continues to develop despite external threats and attempts to influence it."Everything is developing, everything is actively moving forward. If the Eurozone has fallen asleep, then there are other centres of world

development, they are also moving forward. And in the Eurozone and in the States, the situation is also changing. We must maintain the momentum, change the quality of our



economy," Putin asserted.Earlier this month, the Russian President had lauded Prime Minister Modi's 'Indiafirst' policy and the 'Make in India' initiative while expressing Russia's willingness to establish manufacturing operations in India.ddressing the 15th VTB Russia Calling Investment Forum in Moscow, Putin had drawn parallels between Russia's import substitution programme and India's 'Make in India'

initiative.Prime Minister Modi has a similar programme called 'Make in India'. We are also ready to set up our manufacturing operations in India. The Indian government, under the Prime

Minister's leadership, has been creating stable conditions, driven by a policy of putting India first. We believe that investing in India is profitable," the Russian President said.In September, during his one-onone meeting with National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval in Saint Petersburg, Putin had hailed India's rising global stature and the strength of its growing economy under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi."Our special privileged strategic partnership is gaining momentum, gaining strength, which we are only happy about. We are also happy about India's success in building, strengthening its statehood, and developing the economy, which is happening under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi," the Russian President had said during his meeting

Eric Garcetti Calls For Lower Tariff, Fair And Equal Trade With India

World US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti highlighted the potential of the US-India partnership, emphasising the need to lower tariffs and to increase trade and make it more fair and equal. While addressing an event organised on Thursday by the US-India Business Council (USIBC), Garcetti said, "We need, together, to lower tariffs, not to see them go up. We need, together, to increase trade and to make it more fair and equal. We need to, together, make sure that there's training and talent that meets the needs of companies on both sides of the Indo-Pacific."

He further said, "We have to protect our trademarks and our intellectual property, and we have to make sure that transportation and infrastructure exists, for India to reach its goals more quickly, that is in the American interest, and vice versa, in the Indian interest as well.



Pakistan's Pickup Trucks: A Status Symbol Showing Country's Power Gulf

Karachi, Pakistan.In Pakistan's largest city, cars inch forward in bumper-tobumper traffic. But some seamlessly carve through the jam: SUVs flanked by Toyota Hilux pickup trucks.

The Hilux has become a symbol of power, affluence and intimidation in a society marked by significant class divisions."The vehicle carries an image that suggests anyone escorted by one must be an important figure," 40-yearold politician Usman Perhyar told AFP. "It has everything -- showiness, added

security and enough space for several people to sit in the open cargo bed."

On Karachi's chaotic roads, Hiluxes part the traffic - speeding up behind cars and flashing their lights demanding drivers move out of their way. The Hilux first became popular among feudal elites for its reliability in rural and mountain regions.But in recent years, the "Dala", as it is locally known, has soared in popularity as an escort vehicle among newly successful urban business owners.Guards with faces wrapped in scarves and armed with AK-47s can be packed into the back of the truck, its windows blacked out."It is a status

symbol. People have one or two pickups behind them," said Fahad Nazir, a car dealer based in Karachi.

Vehicle for politicsThe Hilux debuted in Vehicle for politics 1968, but the model that became popular in Pakistan was the mid-2000s Hilux Vigo.It was later upgraded and rebranded as the Revo. with prices ranging from 10 to 15 million rupees (approximately \$36,000 to \$54,000). Their prices have remained steady and they retain excellent resale value in a market traditionally dominated by their manufacturer, Toyota."Amongst whatever luxury items we have, this is the fastest-selling item," car seller Nazir told AFP.Dealers say there was a spike in rentals during February's national elections."I swear to God, you can't run an election without a Revo," said Sajjad Ali Soomro, a provincial parliamentarian from Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.In the eastern city of Gujrat, politician Ali Warraich -- from the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party -- finds it essential to travel with an escort of two of the trucks."It is a status symbol. People

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Garcetti said, "And to realise these ambitions, we must recommit ourselves to a mutual path of trust and transparencies so that people know what to expect. India's workforce, which numbers more than a billion people, is one of the most extraordinary resources that humanity has on its planet. They are builders, thinkers. innovators and entrepreneurs. The Indian dream is the flip side of what we used to call the American truth. In some ways you see it even more optimistically sometimes than our own country. And we can leave inspired when we work together about what's possible."Garcetti also called for merging "American scientific and financial acumen" with "India's grassroots ingenuity."The US and India can create ecosystems that tap into this human capital to merge American scientific strengths in research, our financial acumen and business strategy with Indians' jugaad finding a solution to everything, your deep talent pools, your grassroots ingenuity and your readiness to scale solutions on a massive level,"

House rejects Trump-backed plan on government shutdown, leaving next steps uncertain

WASHINGTON. A day before a potential government shutdown, the House It provides a preview of the turbulence ahead resoundingly rejected President-elect Donald Trump's new plan Thursday to fund operations and suspend the debt ceiling, as Democrats and dozens of Republicans refused to accommodate his sudden demands.In a hastily convened evening vote punctuated by angry outbursts over the self-made crisis, the lawmakers failed to reach the two-thirds threshold needed for Hours earlier Thursday, Trump announced passage — but House Speaker Mike Johnson appeared determined to reassess, before Friday's midnight deadline.

We're going to regroup and we will come up with another solution, so stay tuned," Johnson said after the vote. The cobbledtogether plan didn't even get a majority, with the bill failing 174-235. The outcome proved a massive setback for Trump and his billionaire ally, Elon Musk, who rampaged against Johnson's bipartisan compromise, which Republicans and Democrats had reached earlier to prevent a Christmastime government shutdown.

when Trump returns to the White House with Republican control of the House and Senate. During his first term, Trump led Republicans into the longest government shutdown in history during the 2018 Christmas season, and interrupted the holidays in 2020 by tanking a bipartisan COVID-relief bill and forcing a do-over.

"SUCCESS in Washington!" in coming up with the new package which would keep government running for three more months, add \$100.4 billion in disaster assistance including for hurricane-hit states, and allow more borrowing through Jan. 30, 2027."Speaker Mike Johnson and the House have come to a very good Deal," Trump posted.But Republicans, who had spent 24 hours largely negotiating with themselves to cut out the extras conservatives opposed and come up with the new plan, ran into a wall of resistance from Democrats, who were in no hurry to

appease demands from Trump Musk. House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said Democrats were sticking with the original deal with Johnson and called the new one "laughable.""It's not a serious proposal," Jeffries said as he walked to Democrats' own closed-door caucus meeting. Inside, Democrats were chanting, "Hell, no!"All day, Johnson had been fighting to figure out how to meet Trump's almost impossible demands — and keep his own job — while federal offices are being told to prepare to shutter operations. The new proposal whittled the 1,500-page bill to 116 pages and dropped a number of addons - notably the first pay raise for lawmakers in more than a decade, which could have allowed as much as a 3.8% bump. That drew particular scorn as Musk turned his social media army against the bill.Trump said early Thursday that Johnson will "easily remain speaker" for the next Congress if he "acts decisively and tough" in coming up with a new plan to also raise the debt limit, a stunning request just

before the Christmas holidays that has put the beleaguered speaker in a bind.

And if not, the president-elect warned of trouble ahead for Johnson and Republicans in Congress."Anybody that supports a bill that doesn't take care of the Democrat quicksand known as the debt ceiling should be primaried and disposed of as quickly as possible," Trump told Fox News Digital. The tumultuous turn of events, coming as lawmakers were preparing to head home for the holidays, sparks a familiar reminder of what it's like in Trumprun Washington.Musk and Vice Presidentelect JD Vance tried to blame Democrats, though rank-and-file Republicans helped sink Trump's plan."They've asked for a shutdown," Vance said of Democrats. "That's exactly what they're going to get."

For Johnson, who faces his own problems ahead of a Jan. 3 House vote to remain speaker, Trump's demands left him severely weakened, forced to abandon his word with Democrats and work into the night to broker the new approach.

Supreme Court stays Kerala HC's norms on parading of elephants for Temple festivals

KOCHI. The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the guidelines issued by Kerala High Court on parading of elephants at festivals, bringing relief to the devaswoms of Thiruvambady and Paramekkavu, the major participants of Thrissur Pooram.A division bench of the Kerala High Court had imposed strict restrictions on elephant parade, directing that a 3-metre distance be maintained between elephants, and 8 metres between elephants and percussion ensemble at festivals.A Supreme Court bench comprising Justice B V Nagaratna and Justice N K Singh observed that the restrictions imposed by the High Court, contrary to the Kerala Captive Elephants (Management and Maintenance) Rules, 2012, were impractical. The bench noted that the High Court should not have exercised suo motu powers in the case.

Verdict will ensure smooth conduct of festivals: Paramekkavu devaswom secy

The High Court bench of Justice A K Jayashankaran Nambiar and Justice Gopinath P had in the November 13 judgment observed that the use of elephants in festivals was not an essential religious practice. The devaswoms approached the Supreme Court pointing out that the restrictions will bring the conduct of Thrissur Pooram to a grinding halt."We welcome the order of the Supreme Court which will ensure smooth conduct of the temple festivals. The court has accepted our argument that the restrictions are impractical. We will conduct the elephant parade adhering to the Captive Elephant Rules, 2012," said Paramekkavu Devaswom secretary G Rajesh Poduval.V K Venkitachalam, secretary of Heritage Animal Task Force secretary, said: "The SC has directed to conduct festivals adhering to the Kerala Captive Elephants Rules, 2012. As per the rule, the an elephant cannot be paraded during day and night on the same

Accidents on the rise, but MVD lenient on 'fitness' of school buses in Kerala

STATE

KOCHI. The recent fatal accidents that shook Kerala have sparked calls for stringent measures to reduce the number of mishaps. However, the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) has gone more lenient, allowing educational institution buses (EIB) whose fitness certificates have expired or about to expire soon, to continue plying for another four to five months.So far, the practice was to withdraw the vehicles from service and carry out repair and maintenance works before subjecting them for fitness tests as and when their validity ended, even if it meant the vehicle couldn't be operated

for two to three weeks during the academic year. The lone exemption was provided during the pandemic. Now, as per the written directive issued to all deputy transport commissioners, regional and joint regional transport officers, the validity of the fitness certificate of all EIBs, whose fitness expired or is about to expire in the coming months, has been extended till April 2025."It's directed that fitness tests of such vehicles need to be conducted only in the month of April, May 2025. The same is aimed at avoiding subjecting the vehicles to fitness tests by the institutions multiple times in a single academic year," read the December 18 directive issued from the office of the transport commissioner. The decision was taken after the Kerala Private School



Management submitted a memorandum, saying that schools had reopened after being closed for a long period during Covid in December 2021, and the same led to a situation where many schools are forced to submit school buses multiple times for fitness tests in an academic year as the validity period of some buses ends midway.

'The (latest) move will result in EIBs plying without carrying out timely maintenance activities. This increases the risk of mishaps, especially like moving vehicles catching fire. Also, will insurance companies approve claims if such vehicles meet with accidents? Such leniency at a time when accidents are rising will send a wrong message," said a former senior MVD official on the condition of anonymity. For instance, on November 14,

the wheels of a school bus got detached due to loose nuts amid operations at Pattanakkad in Cherthala, he said, adding the same will result in a loss to the state exchequer, with vehicles skipping tests based on the year of registration.

Meanwhile, MVD sources said the usual practice was that such vehicles are subjected to fitness tests at the start of the academic season itself without waiting for the expiry of the fitness validity period."If the fitness validity of a school bus is till August, the management can submit the bus for fitness certificate in April-May itself, ensuring its operation can be availed without interruptions

throughout the academic year. This 'reduction' of validity period in fact ensures the vehicle is in top condition. Now, many vehicles would be plying without carrying out the periodic maintenance tests," said a source.In Kerala, over 23,000 vehicles are being operated by schools. Of these, around 9,000 are owned by CBSE schools while the rest belong to aided, unaided schools and colleges. A huge number of vehicles are operated by private parties. The development comes even as the Ernakulam Regional Transport Office (RTO), the first in Kerala to register one million vehicles, lacks a dedicated Vehicle Testing Centre despite the rise in the number of fitness test inspections over the

IIMB director, dean, six faculty members found guilty of minority rights violation

BENGALURU. The director, dean, and six other faculty members of the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) have been accused of violating the constitutional rights of minority students and staff, with serious allegations of castebased discrimination and harassment. These charges stem from a report, submitted to the principal secretary of the Social Welfare Department of Karnataka on November 26, by the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement (DCRE), which confirms that caste atrocities were committed by IIMB's leadership, including director Dr Rishikesha T Krishnan and dean Dr Dinesh Kumar. On December 9, the department instructed City Police Commissioner to register an FIR against the accused. However, action is yet to be taken. The probe was triggered by a complaint from Gopal Das, associate professor of Marketing, who joined IIMB in 2018. It is said that although Das belongs to the Dalit community, he never sought reservation benefits and applied for the post based on his qualifications and merit alone. Recognised as one of the top 2% professors worldwide by Stanford University for five consecutive years, Das has been vocal about addressing caste-based discrimination within the institution.

As per the DCRE's report, the issue is beyond Das and it accuses Krishnan and Kumar of publicising Das' caste identity through mass emails, which contributed to creating a discriminatory and hostile work environment. The DCRE also noted that IIMB failed to establish a grievance redressal mechanism for SCs/STs members, as mandated by law.

The issue came to light after Das' promotion was put on hold due to harassment complaints made by doctoral students. IIMB initiated an inquiry into the matter, which included a committee member from the SC category. The inquiry confirmed that the students' complaints were valid.

Annual bird census will be a singleday affair on January 18 in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR. The Wildlife Wing of the Forest, Environment and Climate Change department has decided to conduct the annual bird census across the state on a single day on January 18, 2025. The survey

this year will also include satellite tagging of certain migratory bird species, flamingos in particular. PCCF (wildlife) and chief wildlife warden Prem Kumar Jha informed TNIE that the annual bird census used to be a two day affair but will be held on a single day this time. "Technically, it is more precise as birds keep migrating from one place to another and a census for two days may

result in double counting in some places leading to birds in Chilika and other places. errors in the enumeration exercise," Jha "A total 21 antipoaching camps have been set up said. Accordingly, he said, the census will be carried out on January 18 covering Chilika, Bhitarkanika, Hirakud and other wetlands. Preparations for the exercise will begin from December 16. The PCCF

(wildlife) said students will also be given exposure about the census a day prior to the counting exercise. He said this year's exercise will also include satellite tagging of migratory bird species, especially

flamingo, to know more about the migration pattern and distance covered by the species to reach Odisha during winter.

'Scientists of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) will be involved in the research project. The WII will also supply us satellite tagging rings to monitor and understand the flight path of the birds," Jha said. He said the Wildlife Wing has also scaled up protection measures for the congregation of migratory

around Chilika lagoon and each camp is being manned by at least two to three persons," he said. In the last census held in January 2024, Chilika lake had recorded a congregation of 11.37 lakh birds.

Risky disposal of biomedical waste by **Adilabad sanitation workers**

ADILABAD. Irregularities in the collection and disposal of biomedical waste - needles, syringes, saline bottles, pipes, parts of human bodies and foetuses - have been observed in the erstwhile Adilabad district. Sources pointed out that such waste is often improperly dumped and collected by municipal sanitary workers, posing risks to their health, apart from being harmful to the environment and the health of people living in the vicinity.

Biomedical waste from government and private hospitals is supposed to be systematically collected and incinerated at temperatures ranging from 800°C to 1,200°C. Government hospitals in Nirmal, Mancherial, Bhainsa, Utnoor, Bellampally, Khanapur and Asifabad, along with the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Adilabad and other private hospitals, are expected to adhere to these protocols. The sources said the Nizamabad Pollution Control Board granted a contract to a single contractor nearly 40 years ago to collect biomedical waste from hospitals in the district and transport it

to Nizamabad for incineration. This process involves distances of up to 238 km from Asifabad and 158 km from Adilabad to Nizamabad. The increasing number of hospitals has raised the volume of biomedical waste. However, municipal staff, lacking proper awareness and training, often collect and dump the waste improperly, leading to environmental pollution and the spread of diseases, the sources said, adding that contractors have also been accused by locals of exploiting the system by irregularly claiming bills and failing to ensure proper transportation and disposal.

Demand for new PCB offices

Given the increase in hospitals and medical facilities, there is a pressing need to expand biomedical waste management units and establish PCB offices in the newly formed districts. Despite holding key positions, former environment ministers, A Indrakaran Reddy and Jogu Ramanna, were unable to establish such offices in the district.Entrepreneurs interested in setting up new biomedical waste units have alleged a lack of cooperation from authorities, who continue to favour existing contractors instead of encouraging new initiatives that could create employment opportunities, said

They suggest that to address these challenges, the government must establish new biomedical waste management units in each district to reduce transportation distances and ensure timely disposal. It must also increase monitoring by the PCB to ensure adherence to waste disposal protocols, promote entrepreneurship, improve infrastructure, conduct awareness and training programmes for municipal workers to ensure proper waste handling.Municipal Sanitary Inspector D Narender told that municipal workers do not handle biomedical waste, as it is transported to Nizamabad in a dedicated vehicle.Meanwhile, Environmental Engineer G Laxman Prasad noted that the CPCB allocated the responsibility of biomedical waste management to a Nizamabad-based contractor, covering a 150 km radius.

30 students injured in Kendrapara

KENDRAPARA. The annual function of a government high school in HYDERABAD. Justice PC Derabishi block here was scrapped midway after a swarm of bees invaded the venue and attacked students on Thursday. At least 30 students suffered multiple stings in the incident which took place during the annual function of Ramachandra Nodal high school at Fakirabad village. An injured student Sarat Das (13) said the function



was underway at the school playground when honeybees from a nearby tree laid seige to the venue and started stinging those present there. Some students and teachers ran for their lives, hid in the school classrooms and closed the doors. However, the bees followed them and continued their attack.A teacher of the school said

all the injured students were rushed to Derabishi community health centre for medical care. The annual function was cancelled temporarily after the incident. A local said the beehive fell from a tree near the school playground all of a sudden triggering the attack. The unsuspecting students were caught off-guard. "We suspect someone disturbed the bees by throwing stones at the hive," he added.Derabishi IIC Kishor Tarei said the condition of all the injured students is stable. Later in the day, block education officer Srikant Behera reached the school to take stock of the situation.

Bees invade school function, leave CM makes urgent decisions, Cabinet nod comes after: Somesh Kumar to Kaleshwaram panel

Ghose, who heads the Commission of Inquiry into the Kaleshwaram project, expressed displeasure with former Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar for his delay in appearing before the panel on Thursday. After questioning IAS officer and then CMO secretary Smita Sabharwal, Justice Ghose waited for some time for Somesh Kumar's arrival. When the former CS did not show up, Ghose announced he would take a break and that Somesh Kumar would have to wait until the evening. However, as Ghose was leaving the room, Somesh Kumar entered. The panel chairman remarked, "You are too late." Somesh Kumar responded that he was available, but Justice Ghose took a break and returned later to

question him. During the proceedings, Justice Ghose commented the blue sapphire worn by Somesh Kumar, asking whether it would protect



him. Somesh Kumar, in turn, astrologer. In a lighter vein, Ghose replied that he was not an astrologer but a "foreteller" who could predict the future by studying someone's forehead.

Ghose also made sarcastic remarks towards Somesh Kumar, saying, "You were the Chief Secretary and head of all the departments. You cannot say that you were just a secretary to the Cabinet."The panel chairman asked whether Somesh Kumar had ever issued a dissent note regarding the three barrages of the Kaleshwaram project. Somesh replied in the negative. Referring to records, Justice Ghose suggested that the construction of the three barrages had been approved without the Cabinet's consent. Somesh Kumar and Smita Sabharwal explained that due to the urgency of the work, any file approved by the Chief Minister would subsequently be placed before the Cabinet for ratification.

asked if Justice Ghose was an When asked, Sabharwal clarified that files placed before the Cabinet would not have come to the CMO if they had been approved at the ministerial level. She added that her role was limited to general coordination with line departments and did not involve any technical or advisory responsibilities. She further stated that no deviations or concerns had been flagged by either the Finance Department or the Chief Secretary's office regarding the Kaleshwaram files.

Narasan lake encroached and sold as housing plots, allege Harur residents of Tamil Nadu

DHARMAPURI. Residents of Ambedkar Nagar in Harur staged a road roko urging the district administration to take steps to remove encroachments from Narasan lake located in the area. The lake bunds have been destroyed and are being sold as housing plots. On Thursday, about a hundred residents from Ambedkar Nagar, located along Harur-Tiruvannamalai road, gathered on the road with their livestock, children, and vehicles and staged a road roko, condemning the encroachments on Narasan lake. Speaking to , K Sundar, a villager, said, "Narasan lake is a 17-acre waterbody, crucial for groundwater recharge, feeding livestock, and farming. Over the years, the lake's water spread area has been dwindling, and merely 7 acres of the lake remain presently. If left unattended, the lake would soon cease to exist."Another resident R Suresh said, "The lake has been converted into housing plots. The bunds of the lake were destroyed and land is being sold. We urge the administration to look into this issue seriously and help recover our lake." he said.Officials in the revenue department in Harur said, "Tahsildar Radhakrishnan, DSP Karikal Pari Sankar and Harur DRO, Chinnusami held talks with the protestors and assured a detailed inquiry into the matter. They promised that if any violation is identified following this, severe action will be

Officials allay farmers' fears on bypass road project in Coimbatore

COIMBATORE. A consultative meeting was held by Highways and Revenue Department officials with farmers, regarding the implementation of the Western Bypass project. Officials assured them to review the plan after farmers from Madukkarai and Perur taluks alleged that water channels and existing rural roads would be disconnected after works on the bypass commenced. The meeting was chaired by Gnana Moorthi, divisional engineer (Western Bypass) and S Ramkumar, revenue divisional officer (Coimbatore South). Farmers affiliated with the 'Coordination Committee for Victims under Western Bypass' had submitted a complaint with the district collector on December 16. They pointed out that the Western bypass project from Mylkal on Madukkarai Road to Narasimhanaickenpalayam on Mettupalayam Road for a distance of 32.5 km implemented by the state highways department, cuts through existing rural roads and water channels. The road from Theethipalayam village to Ayyaswamy

temple, a 3-km stretch constructed by NABARD bank and a village link road between Om Shakti Temple and Kuppanur road, a 1.5-km stretch, at a cost of Rs 1.5 crore, are being destroyed under the project. They urged officials to construct a flyover on the road from Theethipalayam to the Kallukadai section and from Chellappanpudur to Kuppanur. They also demanded a small bridge across Pallavari near Theethipalayam Chips Company and a water channel near the Om Shakti temple.On hearing the matter, Gnana

Moorthi assured that the highways and revenue officials will make a field visit to examine flaws pointed out by farmers. He added that the official team will change the method of implementation if necessary.

Meanwhile, a coordination committee led by Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam S Palanisamy met V Senthil Balaji, minister in charge for Coimbatore, on Thursday. They urged him to increase fund allotment for the project to construct more bridges and extend service roads.



Why the making of Constitution matters

THE deliberations in the two-day debate on 75 years of the Constitution in Parliament saw the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) highlighting their own commitment to the constitutional vision, but equally keen on pointing to lapses committed by the rival side.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi singled out the Congress for a no-holds-barred attack. He blamed the Nehru-Gandhi family for the subversion of the Constitution. He cited, for example, the Congress party's hand in suppressing the constitutional rights through the imposition of the Emergency and the role of Jawaharlal Nehru in the first amendment to the Constitution.Rahul Gandhi framed his intervention in terms of a conflict between the competing ideologies of civic nationalism and Hindutva, distinguishing the upholders of the Constitution from the supporters of Manusmriti - a text whose tenets challenge the basic premises of India's foundational doctrine.

The BJP relentlessly criticised the Congress as the principal offender when it comes to transgressions of the Constitution. However, the BJP overlooked that in some instances, it has surpassed the Congress in these transgressions. The debate was noteworthy in another respect, with doubts being raised about the Congress' preeminent role in Constitution-making.Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while initiating the debate in the Lok Sabha, said attempts had been made to project the Constitution as a contribution of a particular party in the last few years. "Today, I want to make it clear that our Constitution is not the gift of a single party."It might be interesting to ask why this unhistorical reconstruction is being made. It's certainly not the "gift of one party". But, having been largely absent from the freedom struggle and the Constituent Assembly, we can, perhaps, sympathise with the impulse of the BJP to downsize the Congress' role and insert its own ideas in the proceedings from which it was basically absent.But this is not just about downplaying the Congress' role in drafting the Constitution. It demonstrates more stark attempts to further mainstream the BJP's discursive and political agenda of rewriting the national script to reinterpret events in consonance with the needs of contemporary Hindu nationalist politics. The BJP is unmistakably leveraging its power at the Centre for a calculated reconstruction of modern history. There is no shortage of historical analyses of the origins of the Constitution and, yet, repeated attempts are being made to misrepresent and misinterpret its history. One has to see the Constitution as the product of a collective deliberation that stretched over three years -- more than 7,500 amendments were tabled and 2,500 moved and a document of almost 400 articles emerged, one of the longest of its kind. Its drafters were chosen by indirect elections. But it was Indians who drafted it. No colonial theory and practice was involved in shaping the Constitution. Our own versions of democracy, secularism and federalism driven by principles of equality, justice and fraternity underlined it. This vision of a new India of "equal citizens" was articulated in the Karachi Congress Resolution of 1931. It went on to become the core of the Congress campaign in the 1937 elections and later, formed the core of the Constitution.Contrary to the Defence Minister's claim that the Congress was not the only party which drafted the Constitution, the fact is that the vast majority of the Constituent Assembly's members were elected on a Congress ticket, leading to charges that the Assembly was entirely dominated by the Congress. Granville Austin, in his monumental study of The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation, notes that the "Constituent Assembly was a one-party body in an essentially one-party country...."Thanks to Mahatma Gandhi, BR Ambedkar was appointed Chairman of the Drafting Committee and he, undoubtedly, played an important role in drafting the Constitution. But the Drafting Committee was not entirely a free agency. The draft of the Constitution was discussed as per the views and recommendations of various subject committees and the draft itself was discussed.

Look beyond simultaneous polls

A democracy needs much more than the efficient conduct of elections

THE relationship between the electorate and the elected representatives is that of demand and supply. In a democracy, the latter work towards fulfilling the former's aspirations. The ruling party tries to keep its poll promises, sometimes working to fulfil its own vision of what it thinks is good for the people and the country. One Nation, One Election (ONOE) may be a part of the BJP's election manifesto, but surely it wasn't demanded by any section of society, even though some people felt that India suffered from "too much democracy". That the ruling party was convinced about the merits of ONOE was evident from the repeated assertions of its leadership and the way in which the terms of the Ram Nath Kovind committee were drafted. Its recommendations were a foregone conclusion, but the speed with which the government acted on it has surprised many. Having been elected with a truncated mandate, few expected the NDA government to vigorously pursue this matter, especially since its implementation is far away.

The 'farsightedness' of the government in wanting to legislate on something to be implemented a decade from now is intriguing. Similar alacrity was exhibited in passing the Women's Reservation Bill (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, labelled "a postdated cheque") before the 2024 General Election. The difference is complete unanimity in passing the women's Bill but a total divergence in opinion about the desirability of the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill that pertains to ONOE.

The government won't mind referring the Bill to a joint parliamentary committee as this would satisfy the Opposition and reflect its own openmindedness. The passage of the Bill in a hurry might not be the objective; bringing it on the table and opening up the possibility of a consensus would serve the purpose as everyone would feel they are deliberating a 'grand' electoral reform. But is it so? Simultaneous polls were held for 15 years after 1951 without an express provision to this effect in the

Constitution. The chain was broken due to the vicissitudes and dynamics of power politics. The right to vote in favour or against a government is an essential ingredient of a democracy. While the Bill doesn't take away the right of withdrawing support to a ruling party, it offers the voters the right to elect a government for a curtailed period in order to complete the "unexpired term" of the government that is voted out. Thus, an outgoing elected regime would pave the way for an incoming elected substitute for a limited period.

The voter will be electing the playing eleven once

every five years to fulfil the fetish of simultaneous elections and elect 'extras' or a 'nightwatchman' to replace an injured main player (government). The current system applicable to electing members of Parliament or legislative assemblies in a byelection will now apply to the entire House in the event of mid-term polls.Parliamentarians may consider whether this twisting of the people's right would diminish the character of our democracy. What would be achieved by creating this duality? Is simultaneity such a sacred objective or a fundamental principle that issues affecting democratic choice should be thus subordinated to



managerial efficiency? The wisdom of the lawmakers is on trial. After all, the framers of the Constitution didn't provide for simultaneous elections and left it to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to act within the constitutional framework to deal with the exigencies of any situation. Nobody can dispute the benefits of a short, swift, single predictable exercise, especially when it involves a billion people. While holding elections is a routine democratic exercise, it is not like the UPSC conducting civil services exams once a year as per a fixed schedule. Administrative efficiency is desirable and there are ways in which the conduct of elections could be less time-consuming and involving less manpower. The excessive dependence on paramilitary forces, cited as a bottleneck forcing the ECI to conduct prolonged multi-phased elections, is due to the volatile nature of our politics and the vitriolic campaigning. The extant laws do empower the ECI to hold elections six months prior to the expiry of the term of any House, giving it a certain flexibility in scheduling and bunching elections for efficient management. However, recent examples show that the ECI has opted to stagger elections that could have been

easily combined. Clearly, expediency is more persuasive than a hidebound adherence to the principle of simultaneity.

Whether this so-called reform passes muster in Parliament or not, it is time the government and political parties took up more substantive electoral reforms pertaining to the issues of cash, crime, caste, community, the integrity of the electoral process, disqualification of candidates and capping the poll expenditure that have been suggested by the ECI and are languishing for long. Simultaneous elections are intended to reduce government expenditure in conducting elections, but what about controlling the

use of black money in polls, and finding transparent ways for political funding? The Bill doesn't target these through the so-called

Let it be known that the Model Code of Conduct prohibits only a certain category of public expenditure with a view to denying the ruling party an unfair advantage by spending public resources. One wonders why ruling parties should wait till before the elections for taking major policy decisions and dub them as "disruptors of governance".

Further, elections in any state concern the voters and political leaders of that state, neither affecting the voters of other states nor the Central Government unless the party leadership is obsessed with campaigning everywhere, not letting the local leadership manage state-level campaigns. Would simultaneous elections further diminish the focus on elected local bodies and turn them into nondescript representatives of their central leadership rather

than effective representatives of local voters? The efficient conduct of elections is definitely a source of satisfaction, but a democracy needs much more. As parliamentarians spend their precious time making the conduct of elections more efficient in the distant future, they would do well to devote time to the issues affecting the people here and now. The hazardous air quality in the Capital, especially outside Parliament, the depletion of groundwater, the pollution of our rivers, the pathetic conditions of our educational institutions and public health facilities, and the environmental degradation facing the country are more immediate and pressing issues of governance and deserve their attention as much as the matter of simultaneous polls.

The citizens of India may not be exhausted by exercising their voting right frequently, but they might be exhausted waiting for their aspirations of a decent living to be fulfilled.

Terror alert in Punjab

Police force can't afford to let its guard down

TERROR groups working in tandem with gangsters, mostly based abroad, are keeping Punjab Police personnel on their toes. These are dangerous portents for a state that remained in the throes of militancy for a decade and is yet to fully recover from that prolonged nightmare. The targeting of police stations or posts in Majha, which is vulnerable to cross-border smuggling of guns, explosives and drugs, is a brazen attempt to dent the morale of law enforcement agencies and fuel tensions in the state. According to the police top brass, this is the handiwork of pro-Khalistan groups backed by the usual suspect

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. Handlers based in Germany and other Western countries are also in the thick of things, going

by the recent arrest of three members of the Khalistan Zindabad Force terror module and the busting of an inter-



state gun racket. Two decades after rooting out militancy from the state, the Punjab Police had been jolted out of complacency in July 2015 when terrorists from Pakistan

stormed Dinanagar police station in Gurdaspur district. Barely five months later, the Pathankot airbase was attacked. The two incidents taught the police a harsh lesson — there is no room for laxity when anti-India elements are hell-bent on creating trouble. The latest surge in terror activities is another wake-up call - it should spur the state's cops to be more vigilant and work in closer coordination with Central organisations such as the Border Security Force and the National Investigation Agency.

The recent attempt on the life of former Deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal outside the Golden Temple is a stark reminder that violent extremism is not yet dead and buried in Punjab. The embers of radicalism are still glowing, with efforts afoot to resurrect the bogie of Khalistan. The onus is on

the police to enforce the rule of law and reassure the people about their safety and security.

Buddha Nullah a toxic story of industrialisation

For restoring Buddha Nullah, strict regulations to enforce industrial compliance with environmental standards, robust monitoring of industrial discharge and heavy penalties for non-compliance are crucial.

Buddha nullah, once a pristine tributary of the Sutlej river, has endured a slow and painful decline for over 50 years. Flowing through Ludhiana, Punjab's industrial heartland, it is now an infamous toxic drain. It carries untreated industrial waste, urban sewage and agricultural runoff. The drain symbolises the environmental costs of industrialisation and urban expansion, coupled with human negligence.

Yet, despite the grim reality, a glimmer of hope persists. Restoration efforts, though challenging, offer the promise of renewal and resilience, provided they are supported by bureaucratic efficiency, political will and community participation.In its prime, Buddha Nullah was a lifeline for the region. Its clear waters nourished aquatic ecosystems, supported agriculture and contributed to the livelihoods of local farmers and businesses. However, it began declining as Ludhiana saw rapid industrialisation. Factories proliferated along the waterway, discharging untreated effluents. Domestic sewage, agricultural runoff and unchecked growth of dairies along its banks compounded the pollution. The effluents overwhelmed the nullah's natural ability to purify itself. Over time, it could no longer support the communities that once thrived along

Buddha Nullah's deterioration to a toxic drain has impacted the quality of life of the locals. Children contend with harmful fumes, exacerbating respiratory issues. Adults face chronic illnesses like skin diseases and gastrointestinal disorders directly linked to the polluted water. Fishing communities have abandoned their trade as aquatic life has vanished. The toxic water has not only deprived these communities of their livelihoods but also poses a broader public health crisis.

Statistics paint a troubling picture. The health authorities have reported that respiratory diseases are 40 per cent more prevalent in areas near the nullah as compared to the unaffected regions. A 2022 study by Punjab

Agricultural University revealed alarmingly high levels of heavy metals like lead and chromium in the water, far exceeding the safe limits. These pollutants have seeped into the groundwater, further compromising public health. The polluted waters also contaminate the Sutlej river and Harike reservoir downstream. Being the vital sources of water for both Punjab and Rajasthan, the issue has strained inter-state water relations. Efforts to

restore the nullah have been sporadic and riddled with challenges. Early attempts in the 1980s focused on awareness and monitoring industrial waste, but they lacked enforcement mechanisms. In the 1990s, industries were mandated to install effluent treatment plants (ETPs), but compliance was inconsistent, with many ETPs remaining dysfunctional. Bioremediation was also attempted, but success remained elusive.

Recent initiatives, such as the Buddha Nullah Rejuvenation Project and installation of sewage treatment plants (STPs) during 2018-2022, have been undermined by funding delays, poor enforcement and resistance to the removal of encroachments. The lack of coordination between government bodies and civil society organisations has further hindered progress, leaving the pollution and its impacts largely uncontained. The

judicial interventions sought y environmentalists have been limited to ad hoc measures for a persistent problem. Deeper thought and innovative solutions for a durable impact are needed. Achieving meaningful progress requires a combination of policy reforms, technological innovation and active community engagement. The following strategies can help improve the situation. Stricter regulations are essential to enforce industrial compliance with environmental standards. Robust monitoring of industrial discharge and heavy penalties for non-compliance are crucial. A dedicated task force should oversee the implementation of these

regulations, holding the polluting industries accountable.

Relocating the most harmful industries to designated zones, supported by incentives, could mitigate environmental risks. Such incentives should be comparable with those offered to the new industries and those which move to safer places may also be allowed to



make commercial capital out of their present premises. Comprehensive policy reforms must prioritise the tributary's health with clear goals and timelines while ensuring that livelihoods are protected.

Expanding and updating treatment infrastructure is critical. Increasing the number of STPs and common effluent treatment plants (CETPs) will reduce the influx of untreated waste into the nullah. Real-time monitoring can ensure industrial effluents are treated before discharge. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping can identify pollution hotspots, allowing targeted interventions. Community

engagement is also vital for successful restoration efforts. Educating residents about waste segregation and proper disposal methods can reduce domestic garbage dumping into the nullah. Cleanliness campaigns involving local participation can remove pollutants and foster a collective sense of responsibility. Grassroots initiatives can transform public attitudes and promote environmentally responsible behaviour. It will

be in the interest of the industry to actively associate itself in such endeavours. A clean environment in Ludhiana may attract more industrial consumers.International examples offer valuale lessons. The Thames river in the UK, once known as "The Great Stink". was revitalised through sustained political will, heavy investment and implementation of strict environmental laws. The Rhine in Europe underwent a transformation due to coordinated global efforts. Similarly, the Ganga Action Plan has demonstrated the effectiveness of community involvement and publicprivate partnership. These examples demonstrate that with a committed, multifaceted approach, Buddha Nullah

can also be restored. Restoring it is not merely an environmental endeavour; it is a chance to create a legacy of resilience and collective action. A revitalised tributary can once again sustain vibrant aquatic ecosystems and provide clean water for the local communities.

The future of Buddha Nullah, thus, lies in the hands of the government, industries and local communities. Together, they can restore it to its former glory. Even the most polluted waterways can be revived with determination and collaboration. Punjab and Punjabis can do it for sure.

17 ways to do up Room <u>Interior expert</u>

Raseel Gujral <u>lists simple fun</u> ways to do up your living room.

Personality

I want to walk into a space that makes me sigh! The living room should be designed in such a way that it speaks to you with volume and personality.

Unusual pairing

The rush of being surprised by unexpected beauty. For example a beautiful antique in an otherwise contemporary living room setting is something unexpected.

Art talks

Nothing can replace the timeless appeal of original art. Exquisite pieces of art can hold an entire space together. Touch of unapologetic glamour

Glamour needs no justification. Every living room should have a hint of glamour - need not be loud, just a



touch of Venetian glass can change the look of a room!

Colour

Colour is oxygen — it makes you breathe. Each colour makes you feel different - it lights up your life!

Transform the mundane The layering of materials can transform the simple to the sublime. An intricately worked on carpet in an empty space can transform the otherwise mundane area to something interesting. A simple sofa with exotic cushions can change the look of your living

Sense of origin Never lose it. When you fill your room with furniture it should not shout but should have gentl flavours.

Conversation pieces Key pieces should anchor a space, not let it float away. You may have a small room and fill it with a hundred

small pieces. Visually it's unappealing and your pieces do not get noticed either. Have one large painting or one large sculpture in the room instead.

Let your experiences and travels talk There is no substitute to personal style. Your living room should reflect it in the things

> that you pick on your travels! Find your own inspiration Fashion, art, life everything is a stimulus. One is inspired by books, clothes, fashion shows etc. This inspiration should be brought in to your rooms.

Dare differ

There is nothing more boring than the black dress syndrome. Do not follow the herd. Do up your house differently.

Paint a wall in a deep mahogany! Minimalism

Today to be minimal means leaching every bit of personality. Minimalism is in! Do not do anything over the top. Your room should be simple and sophisticated. Minimalist interiors don't necessarily mean everything is stripped down. It means everything serves a specific function.

Lift your spirits Details. Ones that make you fall in love over and over. Fill your room with little things that give you joy. It can be a simple photo frame, a beautiful



vase, anything that lifts your spirit!

Surprise yourself

The compulsion to constantly surprise yourself. The furniture you place in the living room should have a story, so every time you walk in, it should surprise

A thing of beauty is a joy forever Buying objects of beauty - is beginning a love affair, every time. The joy of finding something new and bringing it home - like picking up a lamp in an antique market.

Change is good

The drama of everyday life. Keep changing the look of your home. Paint a sculpture an electric red this will add drama!

Lighting The play of light and shadow — in pattern and history. Place your pieces in such a way that the light and shadow will form designs in your room.

Take care of your marble flooring

Here are ways to retain the regal air of your marble decora



Using marble for home interiors presents a marvelous panoramic view to home. If you have spent a good

amount of money on installing marble as flooring or for decorative structures at home, you need to take special care to maintain the beauty of this stone. There are some precautions you need to

take when working with marble: -Liquid or food containing acid when

spilled on marble floors could cause it to etch, or leave a dull mark on its surfaces. The dull mark or stain may either be as large as a coin size or could spread over several tiles. So, if you manage to drop any fruit juices,

carbonated beverages, wine and even tea on the marble surface, gently rub the marble with the a clean cloth dipped in a solution of hydrogen peroxide mixed with a few drops of ammonia until it retains its shine.-Another terrible source of etch marks and stains are cleaning detergents which contain acid. Never use vinegar or any other acidic products to clean marble floors. Marble is delicate and should only be cleaned with PH natural, gentle cleaners. It is advisable not to use locally available cheap quality cleaner which may result permanent loss of shining .-Marble floor tiles are porous and can easily be discolored by spills from food, sitting pots, metal furniture legs, oil, ink, water damage, etc. Cooking oils or any other type of greasy products can stain marble like floor. Hence, you should clean it up immediately with some soap and water.-Regular cleaning of a marble

surface and dusting of marble furniture helps to retain its natural shine for a long time. The best way is to use a terry cloth to wipe up any dirt. Instead of using

hot water, it is advisable to wet the marble top with lukewarm water. You don't require scrubbing marble surface unless there are some hard materials present on it. After cleaning the surface with cleaners, you could apply smooth polishing for making the marble glittering and shining.

If you have always been stumped about detangling your necklaces and having all your earrings and bangles in one place, this is for you. Instead of stowing costume jewellery in wooden boxes, why not display them in an attractive manner that will also add to the decor of your home. Follow these

DIY tips. Chocolate and dry fruit boxes:

holi has just gone by and you are probably finishing festive leftovers like chocolates, dry fruits and sweets. Wipe the used boxes clean and store your junk jewellery in them. Chocolate boxes are ideal for storing rings as well as earrings. The small three to four-inch compartments make them easier to fit your rings in separate rows.

5 DIY ideas to organise

your accessories



access. This tip also prevents them from getting tangled. Prepare a cardboard mannequin bust and keep it on your dressing table to drape your necklaces. This will make it



easier for you to choose which piece to wear while getting ready, as you will actually be able to see how it would look around the neck. Keep all your scarves in one place by tying them around the rim of a hanger.

Badminton rackets:

That old racket lying neglected in your storeroom since you passed out of college can be put to good use. Nail it to one of the walls in your room. The net can be a great hanger for your danglers and hoops. Hangers:

Remember those diamond-shaped cloth hangers that had four nails on its corners? Use these for your necklaces, statement pieces and chains for easy

Empty wine bottles:

Wondering if you should dispose wine bottles or use them as fairy light holders? A functional use for empty wine bottles is as bangle holders. Stack several bangles at a time. Unused bowls: Place empty bowls on the dressing table or wardrobe drawer and arrange all your bracelets and anklets in them.

Opposition boycotts Speaker's tea meet as tumultuous Parliament session ends

-Amid an uproar over the Ambedkar issue, both Houses adopted a motion to send One Nation One Election bills to a joint parliamentary committee for further scrutiny.

One Nation One Election

bill referred to joint

parliamentary panel

New Delhi. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday sent

two bills that lay down the mechanism to hold

simultaneous elections to a joint parliamentary committee that consisted of 39 MPs from both Lok

The Constitution (129th Amendment) bill and the Union

Territories Amendment bill were introduced in the Lok Sabha after a fiery debate on December 17, with the

Opposition terming the move "dictatorial" and Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal asserting that the legislation would not tamper with the powers enjoyed by states. According to a statement by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, the joint parliamentary committee, consisting of 27 Lok Sabha and 12 Rajya Sabha MPs, will scrutinise the bill and send its recommendation to the Lok Sabha Speaker.

The bills have been vehemently opposed by the Opposition MPs, who called the idea of simultaneous polls, terming it a violation of the "basic structure of the

Constitution". Congress member Manish Tewari

opposed the introduction of the bills, and termed the

move an assault on the basic structure doctrine that

stipulates certain features of the Constitution are beyond

'One of the essential features is federalism and the structure of our democracy. The bills assault the basic structure of the Constitution and exceed the legislative competence of this House," Tewari, a former Union minister, said. Samajwadi Party member Dharmendra

Yadav said the measure to introduce "one nation, one election" by the BJP was an attempt to bring dictatorship

Meanwhile, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader and Lok Sabha MP Asaduddin Owaisi said that the bill will "finish off" the regional parties.

Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

the Lok Sabha Speaker.

in the country.

top court told

the amending power of Parliament.

of Parliament saw no exception on the last day as an uproar by the opposition over the alleged insult to Dalit icon BR Ambedkar by Home Minister Amit Shah saw both the Houses being adjourned. As a mark of protest, the INDIA bloc skipped the Lok Sabha Speaker's customary tea party. Opposition leaders said there was no point in joining such a tea party when FIRs were being filed against their MPs, and they were not getting a chance to speak in the House.

ONE NATION ONE ELECTION BILLS SENT TO JOINT PANEL

Amid the din, both Houses adopted a motion to send the two bills to enable One Nation One Election to a 39-member joint parliamentary committee for further scrutiny.

n the Lok Sabha, the opposition shouted 'Jai Bhim' slogans as the Speaker read out directions barring demonstrations and protests at the gates of Parliament following the scuffle between BJP and INDIA bloc MPs on Thursday. As the protests continued, the



Speaker adjourned the House sine die.

The Rajya Sabha also witnessed similar protests from the opposition, even as chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said that such "persistent disruptions" were steadily eroding public trust in democratic institutions. Dhankhar said the winter session's productivity

was just 40.03%, with the Upper House functioning for just 43 hours and 27 minutes. "As Parliamentarians we are drawing severe

criticism from the people of India and rightfully so... It is time to choose between meaningful debate and destructive the House.

BJP, OPPOSITION HOLD PROTESTS Before the session began, opposition MPs, including Congress's Priyanka Gandhi,

held a protest march to Parliament from Vijay Chowk demanding Amit Shah's apology and resignation for allegedly "insulting" BR Ambedkar.

The BJP also held a counter-protest and party MP Aparajita Sarangi gifted Priyanka Gandhi a bag with '1984' written on it, referencing the year of the anti-Sikh

riots. The Opposition and the BJP have been at loggerheads this week over Shah's remarks on Ambedkar in the Rajya Sabha during a debate on the Constitution. Matters came to a head on Thursday as MPs from both sides came face to face in the Parliament complex, resulting in injuries to two BJP MPs.

The BJP alleged that its MP Pratap Sarangi was pushed by Congress's Rahul Gandhi. An FIR has been registered against Rahul Gandhi after the BJP filed a complaint accusing him of "physical assault and incitement".

said bigger protests were being

The protests erupted following Shah's

controversial remarks in Parliament.

The NSUI president, Varun

Choudhary, said, "Amit Shah has not only insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar

but also disrespected our nation. We demand a public apology from him. If he fails to do so, he must resign

Echoing this sentiment, the AISA

organised a protest at Ambedkar

University Delhi (AUD), where students burned effigies of Shah. A

senior AISA leader said, "Amit Shah's

statement is not a casual remark; it is a deliberate insult to Ambedkar's legacy

of equality and social justice. We

demand a public apology.

planned across the country.

Delhi diversity: Signages to have info in four languages

Additionally, bureaucrats working with the Delhi government will also be required to display their names in the four languages on boards outside their offices.



NEW DELHI. To promote linguistic inclusivity, the city will soon feature Hindi, English, Punjabi, and Urdu on road signages, directional boards, and the names of the public places, in compliance with a recent directive from the Department of Arts Culture and Language.

This order applies to metro stations, hospitals, public parks, and roads managed by the PWD. The department oversees 1,250 km of roads in the city and updates to signages will begin immediately.

Additionally, bureaucrats working with the Delh government will also be required to display their names in the four languages on boards outside

In a written communication, the department directed all departments, civic bodies and autonomous authorities to ensure compliance with the Act following instructions from L-G VK Saxena. The communication specifies that the sequence of languages on boards and signages should be Hindi English, Punjabi and Urdu, with uniform font sizes for all. Currently, most signboards and nameplates display information in Hindi and English According to the department, the initiative aligns with The Delhi Official Languages Act, 2000 which designates Hindi as the primary officia language and Punjabi and Urdu as secondary official languages.

According to the department, the initiative aligns with The Delhi Official Languages Act, 2000 which designates Hindi as the primary officia language and Punjabi and Urdu as secondary official languages. As per the 2023 Delh Statistical Handbook, Punjabi is spoken by 8.73 lakh people and Urdu by 8.67 lakh.

Order issued

Dept of Arts has directed all authorities concerned to ensure that the sequence of languages on signages should be Hindi, English, Punjabi and Urdu, with

Dalits, students' outfits stage demonstrations after Shah's speech on Ambedkar

The protests erupted following Shah's controversial remarks in Parliament.



NEW DELHI. Several organisations working on issues related to social

protests on Thursday accusing Home Minister Amit Shah of insulting B R

SFI state committee member Sohan said, "Shahs's remarks shows his deeply rooted hatred towards Ambedkar."

immediately.'

AAP steps up heat over Shah's remarks against Ambedkar

▶Two Indian Coast Guard patrol vessels arrived in the Maldives for a four-day visit focused on enhancing maritime collaboration, environmental protection, and regional security aligning with India's SAGAR framework.

NEW DELHI. The Aam Aadmi Party on Thursday demanded an apology and resignation from Union Home Minister Amit Shah over his remarks on B R Ambedkar in Parliament.

With Delhi Assembly elections approaching, party sources revealed that AAP is positioning this issue to consolidate its Dalit voter base and retain dominance in the 12 reserved seats of the national capital.Dalit voters constitute nearly 17-18% of Delhi's electorate and play a decisive role in about 30 constituencies. While AAP traditionally dominates Dalit support in Assembly polls, the BJP has garnered significant backing from the community during Lok Sabha elections.

Sultan Pur Majra, Mangolpuri, Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar, Madipur, Deoli, Ambedkar



Nagar, Trilokpuri, Kondli, Seemapuri, and Gokalpuri. Additionally, constituencies like Bijwasan, Narela, Nangloi, and Shahdara also see strong Dalit voter influence. AAP swept all 12 reserved seats in the 2015 and 2020 Assembly elections.

The reserved constituencies include Bawana, However, in the 2014, 2019, and 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP outperformed AAP and Congress in these segments. Despite the

AAP-Congress alliance in the 2024 general elections, BJP secured victory in 8 of the 12 reserved constituencies. Facing antiincumbency, AAP has reportedly changed candidates on several seats to address voter dissatisfaction.

AAP sources suggest that the party will intensify its focus on Dalit constituencies and leverage Shah's remarks as a key campaign issue. "AAP is making Shah's statement a central issue to regain Dalit voter trust. It aims to highlight the BJP's alleged disrespect toward Babasaheb Ambedkar," said a senior party source. Addressing the controversy, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal criticised the BJP and accused it of betraying Ambedkar's legacy.

Speaking after offering prayers at Valmiki Mandir, he said, "Those who revere Babasaheb must reject the BJP.

After Priyanka Gandhi, BJP MP makes a statement with '1984' bag

BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi gifted Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi a bag referencing the 1984 anti-Sikh riots after her earlier statement in Parliament with bags featuring Palestinian motifs, sparking political controversy.

New Delhi. Days after Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi made a political statement in Parliament by carrying bags featuring motifs of Palestine and Bangladesh, BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi on Friday gifted Gandhi a bag with '1984', written on it, referencing the year of the anti-Sikh riots. Following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, widespread riots broke out against Sikhs in 1984, during which over 2730 people from the community were killed, according to Union Home Ministry data. The Nanavati Commission, appointed to investigate the riots, concluded that Congress leaders including top figures Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar HKL Bhagat, were responsible for the riots.

On December 16, Priyanka Gandhi turned up in Parliament with a bag



emblazoned with "Palestine" on it, along with other Palestinian symbols, including a watermelon, a longrecognised motif of resistance in the region, as well as a pattern of keffiyeh, a Palestinian stole.

Congress leaders called it a "gesture of compassion, commitment to justice and humanity", as Israel's ongoing bombardment killed thousands and displaced many in Palestine

However, it was slammed by the BJP, accusing the Congress MP of remaining silent over the atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh.

'She did not speak a word on atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh but wants to make a fashion statement with the Palestine bag," BJP MP and Anurag Thakur said. Other BJP leaders, including Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adiyanath also criticised her. The next day, on December 17, she arrived in Parliament carrying a bag that read, "We stand with the Hindus and Christians of Bangladesh".

Just a week ago, the Congress MP was also seen carrying a bag with a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani on one side and the slogan "Modi Adani Bhai Bhai" printed on the other.



This Bill is aimed at maximising political gain and convenience. This Bill will finish off regional parties,' Total ban on crackers in Delhi,



NEW DELHI. The Delhi government, on Thursday, apprised the Supreme Court that it has imposed a complete ban on manufacturing, storing, selling, and bursting all kinds of firecrackers in the national capital throughout the year with immediate effect.

"By December 19, 2024 order, it (Delhi government) has decided to completely ban firecrackers," the Delhi government told the two-judge bench of the apex court, led by Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Augustine George Masih.

However, the Haryana government told the apex court that it has kept green crackers out of the ban. Rajasthan government, which is also affected by the air pollution, said it, too, has banned firecrackers completely in areas falling in the National Capital Region (NCR), while the Uttar Pradesh government said they have decided against banning the firecrackers completely.

After hearing these, the bench said that ban will only become effective only when all states forming part of NCR take the same decision on ban of firecrackers.

"For the time being, we direct Uttar Pradesh and Haryana to impose similar ban which is imposed by Delhi," the top court ordered. The Court was hearing the petition filed by noted environmentalist, M C Mehta, seeking appropriate directions and or orders relating to air pollution in national capital and NCR.

The Court, on December 12, ordered Delhi government and other NCR states (Haryana, UP, and Rajasthan) to take a final call on prohibiting the use of firecrackers throughout the year.

10 Ways to add a personal

touch to the ceremonies

Wedding is all about traditions. But, you can

give it a twist by adding elements that are

Ditch the traditional wedding cards for

something more innovative and personal.

From writing your love story with timeline on

either side of the card to opting for

personalised stamps, the options are many.

Bhavna Nevle, who tied says, "I went all the

way to Kanchipuram to get my silk directly

from the weavers. I asked them to ingrain

mine and my fiance's initials in the pallu of

my muhurat sari and the breast of his kurta."

Create a customised runner to the mandap

you. And yes, your partner.

Customise invitation

Ink your trousseau

Forget the flowers and use a runner instead, to lead

the way to the altar. It could

be on any theme -common interests, backdrop of a

destination that's close to the two of you. You can do

the same to the mandap's

Make family pictures part

background as well.

Spice up your interiors with unique

Bookshelves

your bookshelf says so much about you, it's

time you gave it one serious look. Ask yourself if it

is telling stories you want to be told or is it too

Kanika Bawa, an interior architect for 18 years

and an art installation artist whose is listed in the

Limca Book of Records says, "Bookshelves can

be great organisers of space and can even

Here are some unique ways you can use

- Knock off an entire internal brick wall and

replace with a bookshelf wall, add 6-inch of wall

and voila. Another 6-inch extra and you achieve a

1 feet book -storage unit usable from both sides.

casual for your taste.

resolve space crunch issues."



Books are easy to buy and easier to sell or pass on, but the ones that find space in your bookshelf are the ones that have touched you deeply. Interestingly, ardent book lovers can get a sense of people's personality and influences just by looking at their bookshelves; it's like a passage into their mind.

Even overloaded bookshelves can be marvels of designs, simply by the titles they adorn and the way they are set! Some like to store them alphabetically, others by colours; there are bookshelves that have books lined according to sizes, some according to favourite reads or authors.

Not only can those around you but even you can know how you feel for your collection of books by the way you place them in your bookshelf. The ones that you

 Even overloaded bookshelves can be marvels of designs, simply by the titles they adorn and the way they are set! Some like to store them alphabetically, others by colours; there are bookshelves that have books lined according to sizes, some according to favourite reads or

- Use book shelves to frame windows, view +
- Use bookshelves in dual way storage as light boxes that can provide additional ambient lighting to
- Transform your den/library/study area with bookshelves by creating a floating shelf illusion of
- Photo-frame book-shelving can be a great highlight to a living space.
- Invent a round side-table with bottom bookshelf and wheels so you can move it! Move it anywhere!! - Colour-code the books to add colour splash and

Here we have put together some of the unique bookshelf designs we came across -



hether you have a modern house or

a traditional one, living rooms are

the most common part of it for the

simple reason that man is a social animal by

nature, therefore he needs a place which he can

"The living room of your home serves two

purposes - for socializing and for private time

with your family. Since one room serves a dual purpose, it is important to keep its vaastu in the

correct manner," says Dr Madhu Kotiya, body,

mind and soul doctor. She gives vaastu shastra

- Your living room should always be in the East

togethers, then have a living room in the North-

West direction. Since presiding element of

North-West part of a home is "air", the guests

start to feel restless after sometime and tend to

- If you want to have a small pooja or a prayer

room, then North-East remains the ideal

- If you love your guests and want them to stay

with you for a longer period of time, then you

location as god presides in this direction.

tips for positive energy.

or in the North direction.

However if you a have a south-

facing house, then your living

room can be in South East

corner. North direction

although is the more beneficial

- If you are the type who does

not like night parties and get-

direction for a living room.

leaver earlier.

Your extended family has I taken efforts to come down and be part of your big day. Make them feel special by handing out notes, expressing happiness and highlighting their uniqueness. Personalise their seating by placing their photos on the table.

Opt for a video slam book Instead of getting a book and making your guests pen their thoughts about you and your spouse, make them record a video message for you.

Make a grand entry "I entered the wedding

venue in my beau's bike, says newly-married Regina Mathews, a software professional, "My husband is a bike modifier and I thought riding a superbike to the venue; the way people cheered still makes me feel exhilarated." Write your own vows

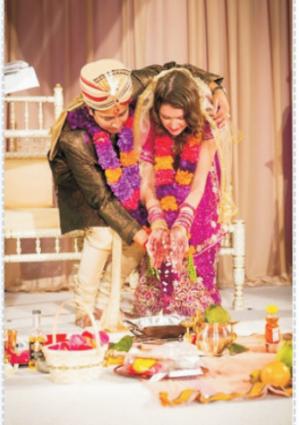
Even if yours is a traditional ceremony, set aside a few minutes to recite vows that were penned by you and your partner. Rakshita lyer, a homemaker, says, "After the panditji recited the mantras, my husband and I exchanged vows that were on how we will continue to love each other despite all our

Screen AV presentation on reception

A great way to break the formal setting is to screen an AV -include pictures and video montages of the two of you and your family and friends. You can even get audio and video bytes from family and friends who couldn't make it to the wedding.

Have a photo booth

Setting a photo booth at the venue, replete with funky props, can add a touch of quirk to



your wedding. From colourful pots to masks and even lanterns, set the mood for some

Make a wedding time capsule

Get the guests to contribute hand-written notes, collect a few instant snapshots, throw in wedding card and even the RSVPs and seal the wedding capsule.

or North in the living area so that he remains in command and guests are not able to dominate

- Put the TV in South-East corner, otherwise it will break down often. The family will waste a lot of precious time watching TV only if it is kept in North-West corner.

- Keep telephone in East, South-East or North, and not in South-West or North-West.
- Place air cooler and air conditioner in West, North-West or East and never in South-East.

Dirty spots at home you never notice



Clean your home not just for aesthetic reasons, but also for the health of your family, and take special care to remove dirt from neglected areas like kitchen cabinets, ledges or even around exhaust fans, says an expert.

Here are some tips from Samrat Goyal, cofounder, Broomberg.in, a new company offering high-tech cleaning service:

Above kitchen cabinets and ledges:

Try going higher than eye level and look at the top of the kitchen cabinet or on top of any ledges. Dust and cooking oil fumes sure do make a 'sticky' combination and you will find plenty of those there.

Around and on switchboards:

A surface is not just dirty if it looks dirty. You need to be more regular at cleaning up switchboards simply because people touch switches regularly making them ideal places where germs are deposited and picked up. Around exhaust fan:

Your kitchen and/or bathroom exhaust fan blades are cleaned once in a while, but what about the area around the exhaust window? We bet you would find a thin layer of grime (dust and cooking oil fumes) that is sprayed outwards by the blades.

Above Geyser:

Your storage type water heater is such a useful thing. But what about the top? Take a look and you will find layers and layers of dust that have been accumulating

Above tubelights/light fixtures:

unchecked for years.

Just because lights are bright does not mean that they are immune to dust. Tube lights and high up light fixtures are perfect dust catchers that are mostly ignored during a clean up.

Behind paintings:

Paintings are supposed to make your living space look pretty. But then they hide a lot of wall and are also places where dust accumulates unnoticed. Make sure you remove paintings and wipe out the dust on a regular basis. Behind sofas:

There is something very wrong with sofas when it comes to cleanliness. Positioning them next to walls creates a small gap inaccessible to brooms and mops. It is pretty hard for the regular home owner to shift the sofa and clean this gap.

Above air-conditioner voltage regulators:

You clean the top of your window or split airconditioner but what about the voltage regulator that is mounted nearby?

High windows: You never clean those high ventilator windows.

Under the sink:

Your shiny well scrubbed sink is keeping a dirty secret. Check out it's under side and all will be revealed.

Vaastu

should have your living room located in the South West direction. However, this place is best suited for master bedroom.

- The floor of the living area should slope towards North or East. Same

remains for the ceiling. Having the door of the living room in East or North brings

wealth, health and overall progress. South, North-East or South-East entrance indicates success but then it takes lot of hard work to achieve. West entrance is good for scholars

and researchers. North-West entrance supports development in all areas of life. South entrance for living area is inauspicious. - Always keep internal furniture, articles and heavy things in West or South side. If there is no such option then use a base of 1-3 inches height to keep furniture in North or North-

- The head of the family should sit facing East









call as a place of gathering - where he can socialize with people and spend quality time tips for positivity in the

Stock market today: BSE Sensex tanks over 150 points; Nifty50 near 23,900

NEW DELHI. Stock market today: BSE Sensex and Nifty50, the Indian equity benchmark indices, plunged in trade for the fifth consecutive day on Friday. While BSE Sensex was just above 79,000, Nifty50 was near 23,900. At 9:19 AM, BSE Sensex was trading at 79,049.92, down 168 points or 0.21%. Nifty50 was at 23,907.15, down 45 points or 0.19%.

On Thursday, Indian markets experienced a broadbased decline, following global market turbulence triggered by the US Federal Reserve's hawkish position on interest rates. Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking said: "Despite the weakness, oversold conditions and resilience in select pockets present buying opportunities. Traders are advised to align their positions carefully, with an emphasis on prudent stock selection."Markets remain under pressure following Fed's strict commentary. Support exists at 23,850, with resistance at 24,200, according to Rupak De of LKP Securities. US markets remained stable on Thursday after the Federal Reserve projected fewer rate cuts. Asian equities remained constrained in early Friday trading, as the US Federal Reserve's strict stance continued to affect American equities and bonds whilst strengthening the dollar.Gold prices were heading towards a weekly decline on Friday following the Federal Reserve's decision on monetary policy adjustments indicated slower rate reductions, whilst attention turned to the U.S. Personal Consumption Expenditure data scheduled later.Foreign portfolio investors became net sellers at Rs 4,224 crore on Thursday. Domestic institutional investors disposed of shares worth Rs 3943 crore.FIIs' net short position increased from Rs 1.01 lakh crore on Wednesday to Rs 1.25 lakh crore

Markets decline in early trade amid unabated foreign fund outflows

NEW DELHI. Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Friday amid unabated foreign fund outflows and concerns over the US Federal Reserve signalling fewer rate cuts next year. The 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex declined 214.08 points to 79,003.97 in early trade. The NSE Nifty also dipped 63.8 points to 23,887.90.From the 30 blue-chip stocks, Axis Bank, Tech Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, JSW Steel, ITC, Larsen & Toubro, UltraTech Cement and HDFC Bank were the biggest laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul quoted lower while Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading in the positive territory.

Wall Street ended on a mixed note on Thursday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,224.92 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data."The FII buying witnessed in early December is getting reversed now with this week's selling reaching Rs 12,229 crore. This change in FII strategy is getting reflected in market trends, too, with largecaps, particularly financials, coming under pressure due to FII selling. The negative response to the Fed's commentary yesterday will be temporary. Recovery led by largecaps is possible in the nearterm," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said.Falling for the fourth day running the 30 share BSE for the fourth day running, the 30-share BSE benchmark tanked 964.15 points or 1.20 per cent to settle at 79,218.05 on Thursday. The Nifty tumbled 247.15 points or 1.02 per cent to sink below the 24,000 mark at 23,951.70.

\$11.3 billion: Startup funding sees marginal rise in 2024

MUMBAI. After two years of funding slump, investments into India's startups are seeing some revival. Investors infused about \$11.3 billion into startups this year, a slight improvement from funding worth \$10.7 billion recorded last year, data sourced from market research firm Tracxn showed. In the coming year, companies are expected to see a sizeable amount of funding cheques but the deployment of capital will be cautious, keeping in line with the trend seen for quite sometime now and late-stage deals (over \$100 million) will take time to close, venture capital (VC) firms said.

Not to say that there's a lack of capital-VC firms raised an estimated \$2.5 billion in funding in 2024 alone compared to less than \$2 billion in 2023 and some of them plan to raise new funds in 2025; but investors want to ensure they make the right bets. "As investors, we are very clear that we need to see a company's path to profitability, we need to see good governance structures, assess firms' go-to market strategies deeply and figure out founders' ability to deliver. When you diligence all of these, it takes some time and investing capital takes longer," Padmaja Ruparel, co-founder at IAN (Indian Angel Network)

Quick commerce player Zepto led startup funding this year having bagged \$1.4 billion in investments alone amid a surge in investor appetite for rapid deliveries. A clutch of companies including PhysicsWallah, Rebel Foods, Eruditus and Purplle also managed to raise funding worth more than \$100 million from investors. There were also few big secondary transactions like Lenskart's \$200 million round. In a secondary deal, shares change hands among a company's investors and no money is added to the firm's coffers. Funding was rather uneven across quarters, probably hinting at a measured pace of deal closures. Funding in the December quarter (so far), for instance, slipped to a three year low of \$1.8 billion after touching \$3.5 billion in the September quarter. "Funding patterns have evolved towards fewer, larger

rounds," said Neha Singh, co-founder at Tracxn. Yet, the sheer size of the Indian market and the shift in consumption patterns towards better quality and more premium products creates growth opportunities for companies, making it an equally attractive bet for investors, industry experts said."There is no lack of belief in the fundamental opportunity that exists in India. Growth opportunities will always be exciting and India is a growth market," said Sandeep Murthy, managing director at Lightbox India Advisors which plans to raise a new fund in the range of \$200 million

Low affordability hits car demand: Kia India MD

NEW DELHI. With car prices going up between 35-50% over the past 3-4 years, owing to safety and emissions mandates, affording a vehicle has become difficult for mass consumers and sales are likely to see a moderate growth of 3-4% in the coming year, Kia India MD Gwanggu Lee said on Thursday. To generate demand, Lee suggests, govt can look at reducing taxes on cars from the current levels where mid-sized cars and bigger ones have a GST rate of over 45%, while smaller ones (under 4-meters) are taxed at

As the company prepares to launch affordable EVs as well as other mainstream cars, Lee said that the increase in car prices came at a time when incomes for many middle-class users did not go up at the same pace.

As part of its strategy to perk up demand in the volume-laden entry SUV market, Kia drove in the all-new Syros mini offroader,



which will stand besides its Sonet model, also an under 4-meter car.ee said that the boxy Syros, which will come with a 1litre petrol engine and a 1.5-litre diesel, will also be offered with an electric version over the next one year. The company has developed the new vehicle after taking into account the customer

preferences here, something it also did during the development of the Seltos and Sonet SUVs and the Carens MPV.But while the company expects to generate healthy volumes from the new model, whose price will be revealed at a later date, the Syros also comes in a segment that is crowded. Formidable models include Maruti Brezza, Tata Punch, Hyundai Venue, and Mahindra 3XO.

'Kia India has always been driven by a challenger spirit... With the Syros, we are further enhancing our product portfolio, and are confident of taking on the competition," Lee told TOI.

Kia India expects to sell nearly 2.6 lakh units this year, and Lee said the company is looking at 3-lakh unit sales next year. Despite the slowdown pangs, the Kia MD said that India still remains "one of the most promising markets" for the company globally. "The country is still amongst the fastest-growing economies of the world, promising a lot for carmakers."

Lee also said that the govt should not tamper with the duty benefits given to electrics, which currently are taxed at 5%. A lower duty makes them affordable, or else the prices may be higher. "Without any tax incentive from govt, it will be very

Govt proposes new legislation to curb proliferation of illegal lending apps

If a regulated entity fails to provide information sought by the authority, they would be fined by up to Rs 5 lakh.

NEW DELHI. The government is planning a comprehensive legislature to curb the proliferation of illegal lending apps. The department of financial services, Ministry of Finance, has prepared a draft bill, which proposes severe punishment with jail term of up to 10 years and monetary fines of up to `1 crore for those found involved in promoting unregulated lending activities. The Bill seeks to ban all illegal lending activities whether carried out by digital means or otherwise. It has also proposed to designate an authority which would maintain a database of all authorised lenders operating in the country. The database will have a facility for the public to search any authorized lender



in the country. If a regulated entity fails to provide information sought by the authority, they would be fined by up to Rs 5 lakh.

Every regulated lender will have to inform the authority about the activities being undertaken by them. This information has to be shared by the authority with law enforcement authorities like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and state police.

The bill provides for not only severe punitive measures against those found involved in illegal lending, but also

raids without warrant against the alleged culprit. Mayank Arora, director-regulatory, Nangia Andersen India, says the intent of the proposed legislation is strong, as it provides for criminalisation of offences and punishments for persons involved as accomplice, apart from persons directly involved.

Two years ago, the RBI notified the Digital Lending Guidelines to curb unfair practices by regulated entities. One of the main issues in the digital lending domain is that the consumers are not aware of the real lenders as there is no physical interaction in the lending transaction. Unregulated entities used this to camouflage as authorised lenders, affecting the entire ecosystem," added Arora. Mushrooming illegal loan apps have become a menace in the country. These loan apps typically offer small loans at exorbitant high interest rates, and use extortionist ways to recover money from borrowers, forcing many borrowers to even take their own lives. Many of these apps operate from overseas countries with the help of little-known local finance

Bharti Airtel prepays Rs 3,626 crore spectrum purchase dues to government

NEW DELHI. Telecom service provider Bharti Airtel has made a pre-payment of Rs 3,626 crore to the government for the spectrum it purchased in 2016. This payment is part of Airtel's efforts to clear its spectrum dues with high interest costs. With this payment, Airtel has now prepaid all its spectrum liabilities with interest costs higher than 8.65%. This year, the company has prepaid a total of Rs 28,320 crore of spectrum liabilities.

Prepaid Rs 3,626 crore to the Department of Telecom (Government of India), clearing all its liabilities for spectrum it had acquired in 2016," said the telco in an exchange filing.

Airtel, India's second-largest telecom service provider, said this is the second prepayment the company has made in the current financial year. In June 2024, the company prepaid all its deferred liabilities for spectrum acquired in the 2012 and



2015 auctions, amounting to Rs 7,904 crore.

2012 and Rs 29,129 crore in the 2015 auction. Earlier this year, in January 2024, the company prepaid Rs 8,325 crore to the telecom department to clear part of its deferred liabilities for the spectrum it acquired in the 2015 auction.

Airtel acquired spectrum worth '8.67 crore in

Airtel has consistently worked on prepaying its spectrum-related dues over the past few years. In July 2023, the company prepaid Rs 8,024 crore to the DoT, and in March 2022, it cleared '8,815 crore for airwaves bought in the 2015 auction. This was followed by a significant prepayment of Rs 15,519 crore in December 2021, which cleared all dues related to spectrum purchases in 2014.

IT sector to drive 15% growth in hiring in 2025, followed by retail

BENGALURU. With the expansion of Global Capability Centers (GCCs) and multi-cloud adoption, the IT sector will drive 15% growth in hiring in 2025, as per the latest data from jobs platform foundit. It is followed by retail with 12% growth, telecommunications 11% and Banking and Financial Services (BFSI) with 10% growth.

foundit said the telecom sector's 11% forecasted growth is driven by advancements in AI, 5G, and IoT, with demand for skills in edge computing, SDN (software-defined networking), NFV (network function virtualisation) and cybersecurity. Overall, the talent platform predicts a

9% hiring growth in the country in 2025. Anupama Bhimrajka, Vice President - Marketing, foundit, said, "As we enter 2025, India's job market looks set to broaden its horizons, with a projected 9% growth in hiring. Companies are not only looking for seasoned professionals but also broadening their search beyond established hubs.""We believe this approach will create a healthier, more diverse environment, allowing businesses to access new talent pools and build a workforce aligned with future needs," she added. The report says technology advancements will drive demand for specialised talent, creating opportunities across

industries. Industries like manufacturing, healthcare, and telecom will adopt edge computing to power real-time IoT applications. Engineers and analysts skilled in managing connected devices and infrastructure will play a critical role. It also points out that with retail media expected to grow into a \$100 billion market, companies will hire digital marketers, programmatic ad managers, and strategists to tap into advertising opportunities on ecommerce platforms.Bengaluru to lead city-wise growth with a 10% job growth, followed by Coimbatore at 9%. The report added that the job market showed.

Zerodha launches Margin Trading Facility: What it is and how it works

Zerodha's Nithin Kamath introduces Margin Trading Facility, enabling investors to leverage funds for stock delivery.

NEW DELHI Zerodha CEO Nithin Kamath has announced the launch of the Margin Trading Facility (MTF), a feature that allows users to borrow funds to buy stocks for delivery. Despite initial reservations about market timing and potential risks for customers, Kamath emphasised the growing demand and the business need to offer MTF.Sharing the news on X, Nithin Kamath said, "I don't know if it is a good time with the fall in the markets, but we are finally launching MTF, which allows you to buy stocks for delivery by borrowing money from us."He added, "I haven't been sure about this product for a long time because of obvious reasons. Customers who trade for delivery tend to ignore the impact of the cost of borrowing, and there's always the risk of the trade going against them, which



leads to a bigger loss."Talking about the growth of MTF in the last few years, he said, "But in the last 3 to 4 years, MTF has grown tremendously, with pretty much everyone offering it. Considering the number of customers asking us for the feature, it didn't make business sense for us to not offer it.'

WHAT IS MTF?

investors to trade with leverage, allowing them to buy stocks for delivery even if they don't have the full amount upfront.

Investors can borrow up to 80% of the stock's value, depending on the stock. In simpler words, through MTF, investors

pay only a portion of the total stock value, with the broker funding the remainder as a loan. Interest is charged on the borrowed amount, making MTF a strategic yet costsensitive trading option.

HOW DOES MTF WORK?

The Margin Trading Facility (MTF) enables MTF allows investors to purchase stocks for delivery with leverage, enabling them to trade even if they don't have the full

amount. Up to 80% of the stock value can be borrowed, subject to an interest rate of 0.04% per day (Rs. 40 per lakh).

For example, if you want to buy shares worth Rs. 400 but have only Rs. 100, you can use MTF. Providing 25% of the total value as your initial investment, the broker funds the remaining Rs. 300, allowing you to purchase shares worth Rs. 400. The stocks must be pledged with the broker as per Sebi guidelines.

WEIGHING THE REWARDS AND

MTF can amplify your returns. If a stock you buy for Rs. 400 rises to Rs. 450, your profit of Rs. 50 translates to a 50% return on your Rs. 100 investment. However, if the price drops to Rs. 350, you lose Rs. 50, eroding 50% of your investment. While MTF offers the potential for higher gains, it also comes with increased risks due to leveraged trading and borrowing costs.

The Margin Trading Facility can be a powerful tool for maximising limited funds, but it demands responsible usage. Stay informed, diversify your investments, monitor balances, and have a clear exit strategy to navigate risks effectively and unlock the full potential of this feature.

NEWS BOX

Australia selector explains 'very difficult decision' of dropping Nathan McSweeney

Australia's chid selector George Bailey has addressed the decision to replace Nathan McSweeney with 19-year-old Sam Konstas for the Boxing Day Test against India, explaining that the move was intended to bring a "point of difference" to the squad. Australia recently announced their 15-member team for the final two Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, with Konstas coming in for Mcsweeny, who had only made his Test debut in this BGT series opener in Perth.McSweeney, who debuted in the ongoing series, was dropped after just three matches, a move that sparked mixed reactions amongst fans and former cricketers alike. However, Bailey emphasised that the decision was made to strengthen Australia's top-order batting, which has struggled against India's formidable pace attack, particularly Jasprit Bumrah, who have been in some recorded to the control of the co breaking form down under."We remain confident Nathan has the ability and temperament to succeed at Test level in the future...It was a difficult decision to leave him out," Bailey told cricket.com.au on



"It has clearly been a challenge at the top of the order for batters throughout the series, and we want to provide the option of a different line-up for the next two matches... Sam gets a call-up to the Test squad for the first time. His style of batting offers a point of difference and we look forward to watching his game develop further," he added. Australia's batting unit took a concerning shape in the second innings of the Brisbane Test, where the lineup faltered despite a stellar first-innings performance.

Travis Head had smashed 152 off 160 balls, and Stave Smith added a solid 101 byt their and Steve Smith added a solid 101, but their and Steve Smith added a solid 101, but their collapse in the latter innings raised questions about the consistency of their opening pair in Mcsweeny and Usman Khawaja. McSweeney, who was shifted to the opener's role despite being a middle-order batter in domestic cricket, struggled to adapt, scoring only 72 runs across six innings—a record low for an Australian opener in their first six innings in over five opener in their first six innings in over five decades.Khawaja, the senior opener, has also faced challenges, averaging just 12 runs in the series with a top score of 21. However, the selectors chose to back Khawaja while dropping McSweeney, prioritising experience over youth.

R Ashwin retires: India's greatest match-winner deserved more respect

Ravichandran Ashwin, one of cricket's most decorated spinners, stunned the cricketing world with the announcement of his retirement. The abruptness of his decision has left fans and experts alike grappling with the void his departure creates. For a player of his stature, the goodbye felt all too quiet, almost unworthy of a cricketer who has done so much for Indian cricket.

India's most successful off-spinner deserved a grand farewell. He merited the roar of a packed stadium, a guard of honour, and the chance to weave his magic one last time on the field. Instead, his announcement came in a room full of reporters at the end of the third Test in Brisbane. There were no rousing tributes or emotional speeches to a stadium filled with adoring fans. Ashwin's final words as an Indian cricketer were shared in



the dressing room, amidst scattered teammates, a low-key farewell to a highimpact career. The only solace is that Ashwin walked away on his terms. As skipper Rohit Sharma observed, the off-spinner saw the writing on the wall and decided there was no point in continuing if his services were no longer required. Still, one cannot help but wonder if the lack of a regular spot in the playing XI, despite his extraordinary record, weighed heavily on his decision.

ASHWIN DESERVED A BETTER **FAREWELL**

Ashwin's father, Ravichandran, alleged that his son faced humiliation, which may have influenced his decision to retire during India's ongoing tour of Australia. While he could not pinpoint a specific incident, it appears he was pointing fingers at how his son was repeatedly overlooked in overseas tours. World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev lamented the unceremonious nature of Ashwin's departure, stressing the importance of a respectful send-off for such a legendary all-rounder. "The next generation has to be better than us. If not, the world is not going ahead.

Australia drop Nathan McSweeney for Boxing Day Test, add teenage opener to squad

Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Australia named a 15-man squad for the last two tests against India on Friday. In a bold call, the Australian selectors dropped Nathan McSweeney and roped in 19-yearold Sam Konstas. Pacers Jhye Richardson and Sean Abbott also returned to the squad.

Melbourne. Australia dropped their latest Test debutant, Nathan McSweeney, after just the first three matches in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Australia announced a 15-member squad for the last two Tests of the series. The fourth Test, a Boxing Day blockbuster, starts December 26 in Melbourne. Teenager Sam Konstas has been added to the squad and he is likely to open the batting with Usman Khawaja at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. While the decision to drop 25-yearold Nathan McSweeney after just three Tests has divided opinions, Australia have added the attacking Sam Konstas in a bid to inject some firepower at the top of the order. McSweeney, who made his debut in Perth, had a tough time dealing with Jasprit Bumrah in the first three

Meanwhile, Australia have also recalled express pacer Jhye Richardson to the squad for the first time in three years. Along with him, pacer Sean Abbott and Tasmania all-rounder Beau Webster have been added to the squad, which is 15 members in size.

AUSTRALIA SQUAD FOR LAST 2 TESTS OF BGT 2024-25

Pat Cummins (c), Travis Head (vc), Steve Smith (vc), Sean Abbott, Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Marsh, Jhye Richardson, Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster.

WHY WAS MCSWEENEY DROPPED?

25-year-old McSweeney was slotted into the opening spot in Perth despite him being a middle-order batter in domestic cricket. McSweeney struggled to get going and keep the scoreboard moving in the first three Tests of the series. While Usman Khawaja, the senior opener, has also struggled, scoring with an average of just 12 and a top score of Australia have rewarded 19-year-old Sam



have backed their senior opener and dropped the youngster, who is just three Test matches old. McSweeney has managed 72 runs in his first six innings, the lowest by an Australian opener in 50 years in the first six of their career in the longest format of the game. Chief selector George Bailey explained the decision, backing McSweeney's ability to find success at the highest level, adding Sam Konstas' ability to score at a good pace worked in his favour.

'We remain confident Nathan has the ability and temperament to succeed at Test level in the future," Bailey said."It was a difficult decision to leave him out," he added.

performances in the ongoing season. Known for his aggressive approach, Konstas is expected to fill the void that David Warner left in the Australian Test

25-year-old McSweeney was slotted into the opening spot in Perth despite him being a middle-order batter in domestic cricket. McSweeney struggled to get going and keep the scoreboard moving in the first three Tests of the series. While Usman Khawaja, the senior opener, has also struggled, scoring with an average of just 12 anda top

score of 21 so far in the series. However, Australia have backed their senior opener and dropped the youngster, who is just three Test matches old. McSweeney has managed 72 runs in his first six innings, the lowest by an Australian opener in 50 years in the first six of their career in the longest format of the game.Chief selector George Bailey explained the decision, backing McSweeney's ability to find success at the highest level, adding Sam Konstas' ability to score at a good pace worked in his favour."We remain confident Nathan has the ability and temperament to succeed at Test level in the future," Bailey said"It was a difficult decision to leave him out," he

Who is Sam Konstas 19-year-old Australian opener set for Boxing Day Test debut

opener Sam Konstas his Test debut in the Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. After months of anticipation, Konstas has finally received his Test call-up for the final two matches of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. It promises to be a baptism by fire for the young New South Wales cricketer, but the Australian cricket community is quietly confident that Konstas will thrive under pressure.On Friday, December 20, Australia announced a 15man squad for the last two Tests against India. With the series level at 1-1 after Australia were denied victory at the Gabba, the selectors have made some pivotal changes to the squad. In a major decision, they have dropped 25-year-old Nathan McSweeney after just three Test matches. McSweeney, who struggled against the Jasprit Bumrah-led pace attack, scored only 72 runs across six innings—the lowest tally for an Australian Test opener in their first six knocks since 1974.

Usman Khawaja fared no better. The 38-yearold managed just 63 runs in six innings but retained his place due to the invaluable experience he offers.Border-Gavaskar Trophy: Full Coverage

Australia appear to have learned a hard lesson.



When McSweeney, primarily a middleorder batsman in domestic cricket, was added to the squad at the start of the series, doubts were raised about his ability to handle India's high-quality attack. McSweeney struggled to keep the scoreboard moving, and Khawaja's poor form exacerbated the fragility of Australia's top order.

WHO IS SAM KONSTAS

By including Sam Konstas, Australia hope to inject aggressive intent at the top of the order. Konstas enters the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with an impressive record across formats.In December 2024, Konstas made his debut for the Sydney Thunder in the Big Bash League. Opening alongside David Warner, he smashed a blistering 57 off 26 balls, marking the fastest half-century in Sydney Thunder's history. His innings included eight boundaries and two sixes, playing a key role in the team's victory over the Adelaide Strikers.

Konstas also featured for the Prime Minister's XI in a pink-ball warm-up match against India at Manuka Oval. He scored an outstanding 107 off 97 balls, including 14 fours and a six, against a formidable Indian bowling attack featuring Mohammed Siraj and Ravindra Jadeja. This performance further solidified his reputation as a rising star in Australian cricket.n October-November 2024, Konstas was selected for Australia A in their series against India A. In the second unofficial Test, he played a crucial role with an unbeaten 73 in the second innings, helping secure a victory for

'LIKE CLARKE, WARNER AND SMITH'

With 736 runs across formats this summer, Konstas has drawn widespread acclaim from cricketing legends and commentators. Former England captain Michael Vaughan had championed his inclusion in the Test squad, describing him as "fearless" and "unflappable."

brilliance ensured a competitive total.

Bangladesh's bowlers, led by Rishad

Hossain, dominated the West Indies batting

lineup. Taskin Ahmed set the tone by

ishad Hossain's Impactful Bowling

MI's Akshita Maheshwari set to take flight: From sapno ka sheher to WPL deal

New Delhi In India, where a layman is still getting accustomed to the concept of women's cricket, playing the sport for a female athlete comes with its fair share of challenges. For Akshita Maheshwari, Mumbai Indians' new recruit in the Women's Premier League, it wasn't any different. In Jaipur, the youngster was in a circle where cricket is still considered a male-dominated sport, but what was different was her family's

When she was in her teens, Akshita had to face rejections from academies that did not promote the women's game, but they did not stop her from pursuing her dreams passionately. Once she found her way, she kept taking mini strides, rising through age group cricket and, in 2024, landed her maiden WPL deal with the 2023 champions. "I always used to play with my brothers in the terrace, but not that intensely as there were not many girls where my father bought a new house. never liked staying at home, and preferred going out and playing. My father had to face questions in our colony about me playing



with boys every time," Akshita said in an exclusive interview with India Today. But he, my mother and brother supported me; they said, 'khelo, kya fark padta hain kaun kya bol raha hain, aapko jo accha lagta hain wo karo (play, it doesn't matter what people are saying, do what your heart says). Then I got to know that there are academies and I looked out for Neerja Modi Academy."But they said that they don't teach girls. It was five to six years ago. I went to the KL Saini Cricket Academy for running and I saw another girl training. I immediately called my father, after which I registered there, and it started from there," Akshita said.

The surreal moment

With only 19 slots to be filled in the miniauction, Akshita had to fight with 122 players who threw their hat in the ring. In the opening round and first accelerated round, her name did not pop up. But in the second accelerated round, the franchises shortlisted her, and it was MI, who roped her in at a base price of Rs 20 lakhs. Akshita was plying her trade with Rajasthan in the Senior Women's One-Day Trophy when MI picked her.

Bangladesh secure 1st-ever 3-0 T20l sweep vs West Indies after Jaker Ali special

Kingstown. Bangladesh capped off a strong comeback on their Caribbean tour with a commanding 80-run win over West Indies in the third T20I at Arnos Vale, St. Vincent, on December 20. This victory secured a 3-0 series sweep, marking their first clean sweep in T20Is in nearly two years. Batting first, Bangladesh set a formidable total of 189/7, their highest T20I score in the West Indies. Jaker Ali played a starring role, smashing an unbeaten 72 off just 41 balls. The bowlers then delivered a clinical performance, bundling out the West Indies for 109, their lowest-ever T20I total against Bangladesh. Jaker Ali Shines Bright

Jaker Ali continued his stellar form, anchoring the innings with six sixes and three fours. The match saw a dramatic moment when Jaker appeared to be run out after a mix-up with Shamim Hossain. However, the third umpire adjudged Shamim out instead, allowing Jaker to resume his innings. He



capitalised on the reprieve, smashing 20 runs off the 18th over and three sixes in the final over bowled by Alzarri Joseph, leading Bangladesh to a strong finish. Earlier, Parvez Hossain Emon provided a quick start, replacing the injured Soumya Sarkar. His 39 off 21 balls included two sixes and four boundaries, helping Bangladesh score 54 runs in the powerplay. Despite losing wickets in the middle overs, Jaker's

dismissing Brandon King early, while Mahedi Hasan continued his fine run by removing Nicholas Pooran for the third

time in the series. Rishad Hossain was the standout performer with 3/20, executing a sharp run-out of Johnson Charles and dismissing Rovman Powell, Gudakesh Motie, and Alzarri Joseph. The hosts struggled to build partnerships, with Johnson Charles and Nicholas Pooran offering the only resistance. This sweep marked a significant turnaround for Bangladesh, coming after a 3-0 loss in the ODI series. The emphatic performances from Jaker Ali and Rishad Hossain signal promising prospects for the team as they build momentum for future challenges.

Carabao Cup: Manchester United ousted by Tottenham in QF despite Amad Diallo-show

-Ruben Amorim endured his first major setback as Manchester United manager, with his side crashing out of the Carabao Cup after a thrilling 4-3 defeat to Tottenham Hotspur, despite a spirited effort for a late comeback driven by the likes of Amad Diallo and Joshua Zirkzee.

London. Ruben Amorim's time at Manchester United faced its first significant challenge as his team exited the Carabao Cup quarterfinals with a thrilling 4-3 defeat to Tottenham Hotspur on December 20. Despite a spirited comeback attempt, Ange Postecoglou's Spurs managed to hold their ground and secure a spot in the semi-finals.

Tottenham took control early in the game with Dominic Solanke netting twice and Dejan Kulusevski adding a third to put the hosts ahead 3-0 by the 54th minute. However, two critical mistakes by Spurs' 36-year-old goalkeeper Fraser Forster dramatically shifted the momentum.Forster, filling in for the injured Guglielmo Vicario, initially made a stunning save to deny Joshua Zirkzee's header. But moments later, under pressure from Zirkzee, he attempted a poor pass intercepted by Bruno Fernandes. Fernandes set up Zirkzee for a simple finish, making it 3-1. The drama heightened seven minutes later when Forster mishandled another backpass, allowing Amad Diallo to slide in and deflect his clearance into the net for 3-2. Diallo, who recently scored a decisive goal against Manchester City, came close to an equaliser with a long-range effort that rattled Forster



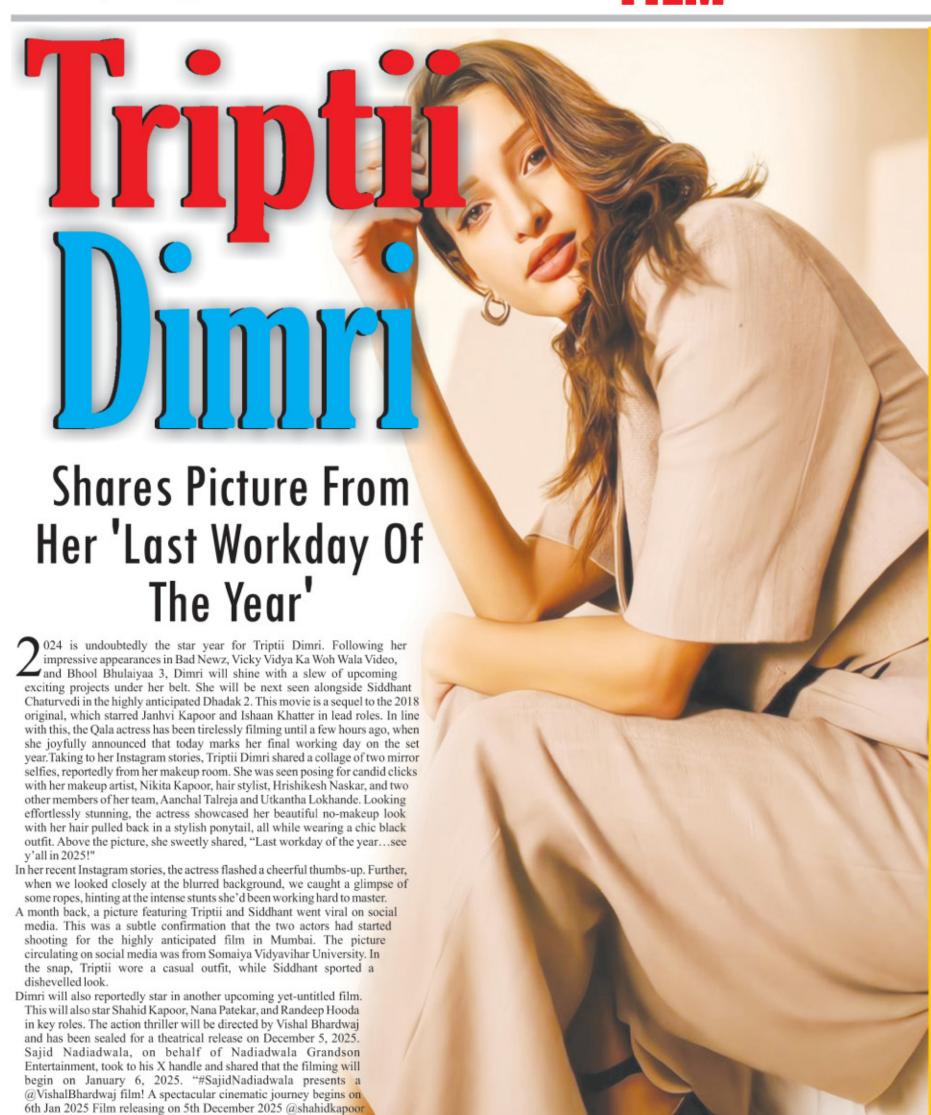
further. United's Late Surge Falls Short

United ramped up their attacks in the final stages, driven by substitutes Alejandro Garnacho and Diallo. Jonny Evans added to the tension by heading in a goal during stoppage time to bring the score to 4-3. Despite the relentless pressure, Tottenham managed to secure the victory with Son Heung-min's clever goal directly from a corner, which caught United keeper Altay Bayindir off guard.

Rashford's Absence Raises Questions

The match was also marked by the absence of Marcus Rashford, who was left out of the squad following recent remarks about his future. Amorim's decision to exclude Rashford entirely, along with limiting Garnacho to a substitute role, has fueled speculation about the manager's approach to squad

management. This defeat leaves Amorim with the challenge of rallying his team amidst rising expectations and a demanding schedule. With questions looming over player management and on-field consistency.



ver since Arjun Kapoor confirmed his breakup with Malaika Arora, all eyes have been on her. While the Singham Again actor revealed his single status at a Diwali party, Malaika has maintained her silence on the matter and has not spoken about it in public. However, her cryptic social media posts since her breakup have often garnered the attention of her fans and followers.On Thursday, December 19, Malaika shared another such cryptic post on her Instagram Stories. The picture featured a red heart made with fingerprints and discussed the importance of realising one's worth, self-respect and Malaika Arora and Arjun actress is gearing up for Christmas already. She shared a video on her Instagram account,

@tripti_dimri23 @nanagpatekar @RandeepHooda

@WardaNadiadwala," the tweet on Nadiadwala Grandson

Entertainment's X handle read.

Cryptic Post Talks About Self-Worth: 'Invest Your Energy In Those...'

the full-sleeved dress with golden heels and a cute red bow to add a pop of colour. In the caption of the post, Malaika wrote, "Santa hasn't even started packing, and I'm already in full Christmas mode. Bring on the hot cocoa, holiday movies, and all the sparkle!"

Malaika recently took a train trip to an undisclosed location. While she shared the first part of her journey



setting boundaries. It read:

"Invest your energy in

those who truly value your

Kapoor started dating in

2018 soon after the

Chaiyya Chaiyya star

parted ways with her ex-

husband, Arbaaz Khan.

Nearly six years later, they

decided to call it quits.In

other news, the 49-year-old

the festive season. The actress

was dressed in a classic white

mini bodycon dress.She paired

time and presence."

back in November, she released the second part of her train journey just days ago. In the video, she recreated Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge's iconic train scene but with the roles reversed. As the reel began, Malaika was seen standing at the gate of the coach dressed in a white comfy co-ord set, helping her co-passengers run to catch her hand to get on the train.

showcasing her preparation for On the work front, Malaika is currently judging the first season of the dance reality show India's Best Dancer vs Super Dancer: Champions ka Tashan alongside Remo D'souza and Geeta Kapur.

Rana Daggubati's Birthday Wish For Wife Miheeka Bajaj Is Love



ana Daggubati's wife Miheeka Bajaj is celebrating her birthday today, and the actor made sure to make the day memorable with a special wish. Rana shared a throwback photo from their wedding celebration on Instagram. In the photo, suggestively from their haldi celebrations, Miheeka is dressed in yellow attire whereas the actor chose an all-white look. The couple can be happily posing for the photo while embracing each other.Rana wrote, "Happiest to you", followed by

Rana Daggubati also shared a recent selfie with Miheeka where the duo were all smiles for the camera. The actor was dressed in a white sweatshirt while the birthday girl was seen in a bright red dress.

Miheeka's birthday comes days after the actor turned 40. Sharing her birthday wishes, Miheeka dropped a series of candid pictures of Rana. "The man with the ever-changing looks and personalities that go hand in hand. There isn't a moment of dullness with you around. The constants in life have been entertainment and an unending supply of love. May you shine bright and dorn a lot of looks and personalities in the coming years. This year as you turn 40 my only wish is for you to remain forever 14! It never ceases to amaze me how you've managed to maintain the vigour, excitement, thoughts and passion of a kid who's just starting off on their journey. May you always be excited, inquisitive, passionate and ambitious," Miheeka wrote in a long caption accompanying the post.

On the work front, Rana Daggubati is currently busy with his chat show, The Rana Daggubati Show on Prime Video. Last month, the show premiered at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). The launch featured the first episode, sarring Nani, Teja Sajja, and Priyanka Arulmohan. The eight-part Telugu Original chat show will feature Dulquer Salmaan, Naga Chaitanya Akkineni, S.S. Rajamouli, Ram Gopal Varma, Rishab Shetty, Siddhu Jonnalagadda, Sreeleela, and others as gets.

Nana Patekar Recalls Visiting Irrfan Khan's Madh Home: 'He **Loved Jasmine Plants'**



Tana Patekar, widely acclaimed for his versatile acting, recently shared touching memories of the late Irrfan Khan, celebrating the actor's profound impact. He revealed Irrfan's love for night-blooming jasmine plants and how the actor had expressed a desire to have them. Nana also reminisced about an early conversation with Sutapa, Irrfan's wife, where he assured her of Irrfan's bright future in the film industry. Reflecting on a visit to Irrfan's home in Madh, Nana shared how deeply connected he feels to Irrfan's memory. In a heartfelt conversation with Vishal Bhardwaj for Zee Studios, Nana Patekar described Irrfan as a remarkable individual and shared how Sutapa, who worked as a screenwriter for Khamoshi, encouraged him to recommend Irrfan for roles. Nana, however, was confident in Irrfan's talent and future, telling Sutapa, "He will suggest our name in the future. He is a very big actor, don't worry."

Nana also recalled Irrfan's humility despite his success. He shared a poignant memory of visiting Irrfan's house in Madh, where Irrfan spoke about his love for night-blooming jasmine plants. The actor had asked Nana to plant one for him, a request that left a lasting impression on Nana, deepening his connection to Irrfan's legacy.

In another conversation with Anil Kapoor, Nana revealed his initial hesitation to watch the film Animal, starring Ranbir Kapoor. However, upon being persuaded by friends, he praised Anil's restrained and balanced performance, contrasting it with the more exaggerated portrayals of other cast members. This admiration showcased the respect between the two actors, further exciting fans about their dynamic after their iconic roles in the Welcome series.Currently, Nana Patekar is preparing for the release of his upcoming movie, Vanyaas.

Directed by Gadar filmmaker Anil Sharma, the movie also stars Utkarsh Sharma and Simrat Kaur. With its focus on family, honor, and selfacceptance, Vanvaas offers an emotional narrative that redefines the concept of familial bonds. Ahead of its release, the makers of Vanvaas have arranged a special screening for Aamir Khan in Mumbai. A source revealed, "Nana and Aamir Khan share a great bond, the team of Vanvaas has already arranged a special screening for the actor in Bombay. Aamir will be watching the film on 20th December." The trailer, released earlier this month, teases a story of resilience and belonging, adding to the anticipation for its release under the Anil Sharma Productions banner.