

Daily

सच के हक में...

THE PHOTON NEWS

द फोटोन न्यूज Published from Ranchi

Ranchi • Monday, 06 January 2025 • Year : 02 • Issue : 344 • Ranchi Edition • Page : 12 • Price : ₹3 • www.thephotonnews.com

E-Paper : epaper.thephotonnews.com



जो कहा सो किया हर बहना को हर साल

₹30,000

मंईयां सम्मान कार्यक्रम

18 से 50 वर्ष की
हर मंईयां को

₹2,500

प्रति माह



दिनांक : 06 जनवरी 2025

समय : 12:30 बजे अपराह्न

स्थान : ट्रेनिंग ग्राउण्ड, खोजाटोली (कुटियातु चौक),
नामकुम, राँची



योजना से संबंधित वीडियो देखने के लिए
QR CODE को स्कैन करें

हेमन्त सोरेन
मुख्यमंत्री, झारखण्ड



सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार

शामिल थे। प्रशिक्षण का शुभारंभ पिरामल फाउंडेशन की 'क्लाइमेट एंड सररटेनेबिलिटी' टीम की प्रोग्राम लीडर कुति रानी ने किया। उन्होंने टीम का परिचय कराया और प्रशिक्षण के उद्देश्यों को स्पष्ट किया। इस दौरान जल संरक्षण और स्वच्छता पर विशेष जोर देने, प्रॉब्लम ट्री के माध्यम से जल संकट के समाधान की पहचान करने और प्रेरणादायक नेतृत्व वीडियो के जरिए प्रशिक्षण दिया गया। प्रोग्राम लीडर कुति रानी ने कहा कि यह प्रशिक्षण प्रोग्राम पिरामल फाउंडेशन की 'क्लाइमेट एंड सररटेनेबिलिटी' टीम के जरिये पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग, जल शक्ति मंत्रालय और कफ़े प्रखंड के ग्रंथालय और पदाधिकारी, प्रखंड पंचायती राज पदाधिकारी रंजन कुमार गुप्ता तथा ब्लॉक



कचरे में सियाली खुशबू

मानगोवासियों के लिए भले ही कचरे का पहाड़ आफत का सबब बना हो, लेकिन राजनीतिवाजों के लिए यह खुशबू का झोंका लेकर आया है। वर्षों से कूड़ागाह बना मेरीन ड्राइव अपनी बदहाली के आंसू बहा रहा है, लेकिन क्या हुआ आदित्यपुर और बारा है ना। हालांकि, आदित्यपुर और बारा में भी नेतागिरी शुरू हो गई है। ऐसे में सवाल उठ रहा है कि कचरा कहाँ फेंका जाए। यह हमारी आपकी चिंता है, लेकिन नेताओं की नहीं। नेता कह रहे हैं कि अभी तो एक महीने ही हुए हैं, जब तक इसके लिए युद्ध न हो जाए, तब तक राजनीति का आनंद नहीं। एक-दूसरे पर गंदगी फेंका-फेंकी का दौर शुरू हो गया है। वर्तमान माननीय, पूर्व को जिम्मेदार ठहरा रहे हैं, तो उनके शुभचिंतकों ने तीन जगह धरना दे दिया। इनके अलावा भी कई नेता जापान-जापान भी खेल रहे हैं। ऐसे में जनता कन्स्यूज हो गई है।

मानगो हो गया जानमुक्त!

इन दिनों चर्चा में तो मानगो ही है, चाहे बात कचरे की हो या जाम की। मानगो पुल पर आम हो चुका जाम अब राहत पहुंचा रहा है। इसे फ्लाईओवर का सगुन कहें या विधानसभा



चुनाव का परिणाम, लेकिन अब यहाँ का जाम आम लोगों को उतना नहीं सता रहा है, जितना पहले झेलाता था। चुनाव के बाद विधायक जी का अल्टीमेटम शायद काम आ गया। अब मानगो पुल पर वैसा जाम नहीं लग रहा, जैसा पहले होता था। बस स्टैंड के पास अब ट्रकों को उतनी देर तक पार नहीं कराया जाता है, जैसे पहले होता था। यह तब है, जब फ्लाईओवर बनने से सड़कें संकरी हो गई हैं। अब तो लोग यह भी कह रहे हैं कि फ्लाईओवर की क्या जरूरत है। बस इतना सा काम ही करना था। वैसे पुलिस-प्रशासन ने दुकानों पर खूब डंडे चलाए थे, जो समय बीतते भर जाते हैं।

बाधिन के बाद आया बाध

झारखंड, खासकर कोलहान के जंगलों में इन दिनों एक बाध की चर्चा है, जो पता नहीं कहाँ से घुस गया है। हाथियों को भगाने के लिए नियुक्त वनकर्मी अब अपनी जान बचाते हुए

बाघ को खोजने में लगे हैं। कुछ दिनों पहले तक ओडिशा के सिमलीपाल जंगल से आई बाधिन ने इन कर्मियों को व्यस्त और ग्रामीणों को दहशत में रखा था। एक माह बाद वह पकड़ाई तो सभी ने राहत की सांस ली। उसके जाने के बाद वनकर्मी अभी छुट्टी का प्लान बना रहे थे कि यह बाघ आ गया। पहले पुरुलिया, फिर चांडिल होते हुए सरायकेला में विचरने लगा है। अब वन कर्मियों के हाथ-पैर फूल रहे हैं कि पता नहीं बाघ कहाँ छिपा बैठा है। हालांकि, खास बात यह है कि बाघ की मौजूदगी से हाथियों को फर्क नहीं पड़ा है। वे पहले की तरह गांव-खेत में अपना निवाला ढूँढ रहे हैं।

धन-धान्य की होगी जांच!

अभी पूरे सूबे में धान की खरीद हो रही है, लेकिन कई जगह अब भी पर्याप्त मात्रा में धान नहीं पहुंच रहा है। हालांकि, इससे प्रशासनिक अमला को कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता है, वे अपना काम कागज पर कर रहे हैं, उनका टारगेट भी पूरा हो जाएगा। हर साल पूरा हो जाता है, तो इस बार क्यों नहीं होगा। भले ही, किसान धान बेचने आए या नहीं, कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। वैसे एक विधायक ने धान क्रय केंद्र का उद्घाटन करते समय कह दिया था कि अब इसका क्या फायदा। किसान तो पहले ही धान बेच चुके हैं। अब किसान दुसु-मकर मनाएंगे कि धान बेचने के लिए केंद्र-केंद्र भटकेंगे। यह बात शायद हाकिम लोग नहीं जानते-समझते। एक बड़े किसान ने तो यहां तक कह दिया था कि झारखंड में जितनी खेती नहीं होती है, उससे ज्यादा सरकार धान खरीद लेती है। क्या इसकी निष्पक्ष जांच होगी।

समाचार सार शहर पहुंचे कांग्रेस के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष

JAMSHEDPUR : कांग्रेस के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष केशव महतो कमलेश रविचार को शहर आए। यहां टूसु मेला में शामिल होने के बाद दोपहर



अयोजित बेलगाम, कर्नाटक अधिवेशन में जय गांधी, जय भीम, जय संविधान कार्यक्रम का आयोजन प्रखंड स्तर पर पदयात्रा एवं मार्च निकाल कर क्रमवार 26 जनवरी तक आयोजित करना है। इस अवसर पर जिलाध्यक्ष आनंद बिहारी दुबे, राकेश तिवारी, अजय सिंह, खगोनचंद्र महतो, सामंता कुमार, एलबी सिंह, प्रिंस सिंह आदि भी उपस्थित थे।

बागुनहातु में चला नशा मुक्ति जागरूकता अभियान

JAMSHEDPUR : बागुनहातु में रविवार को भाजपा कार्यकर्ताओं ने नशा मुक्ति अभियान चलाया, जो बागुनहातु चौक से निकल कर विभिन्न इलाकों में भ्रमण कर लोगों को जागरूक किया। बागुनहातु स्टेडियम में पहुंचकर क्रिकेट खेल रहे खिलाड़ियों से मुलाकात की और उन्हें बागुनहातु मैदान सहित पूरे क्षेत्र को नशामुक्त बनाने का संकल्प दिलाया। इस अभियान में भाजपा, जमशेदपुर महानगर के पूर्व जिला अध्यक्ष गुंजन यादव, प्रदेश मंत्री युवा मोर्चा अमित अग्रवाल, राकेश सिंह, बारीडीह भाजपा मंडल अध्यक्ष जीवन साहू, भाजयुमो जिला महामंत्री अभिमन्यु सिंह आदि भी शामिल थे।

मरुधर की गोष्ठी में 30 साहित्यकारों ने पढ़ी रचनाएं

JAMSHEDPUR : साहित्यिक संस्था मरुधर साहित्य ट्रस्ट के तत्वाधान में रविवार को साहित्य गोष्ठी हुई। इसमें 30 साहित्यकारों ने अपनी रचना का पाठ किया। इनमें नीता सागर चौधरी, माधवी उपाध्याय, नवीन अग्रवाल, रीना सिन्हा सलोनी, सविता सिंह मोरा , डॉ. लता मानकर, वसंत जमशेदपुरी, दीपक वर्मा, पूनम शर्मा स्नेहिल, उपासना सिन्हा, सुदीपा जेठी राउत, सुधा गोयल नवीन, अनीता निधि, पूनम सिंह, मनीष सिंह वंदन, क्षमाश्री दुबे, डॉ. आशा गुप्ता आदि शामिल थीं। कार्यक्रम का उद्घाटन अरुण बाकरेवाल, शैली अग्रवाल, नरेश अग्रवाल व महेश अग्रवाल ने किया।

उलीडीह में 11 को होगा सुंदरकांड का पाठ

JAMSHEDPUR : हनुमान सेवा दल की बैठक रविवार को मानगो के उलीडीह स्थित आशीर्वाद नगर न्यू शर्मा लाईन में हुई। इसमें निर्णय लिया गया कि अयोध्या में रामलला की प्राण-प्रतिष्ठा की वर्षगांठ पर सामूहिक सुंदरकांड पाठ होगा। संस्था के संयोजक पं. बिपिन कुमार झा ने कहा कि अयोध्या में 22 जनवरी को रामलला की प्राण-प्रतिष्ठा हुई थी, उसकी हिंदी तिथि 11 जनवरी को पड़ रही है। बैठक में सेवा दल के अध्यक्ष एके गिरी, सचिव रामशंकर झा, सहसचिव रामाशंकर सिंह, कोषाध्यक्ष तरुण कुमार चौधरी आदि मौजूद थे।

जेसी हाईस्कूल में हुई खेलकूद प्रतियोगिता

GHATSILA : जगदीश चंद्र उच्च विद्यालय परिसर मैदान में रविवार को नेताजी जन्म जयंती समारोह समिति की ओर से खेलकूद प्रतियोगिता आयोजित की गई। इसमें विभिन्न विद्यालयों से लगभग 400 से अधिक छात्र-छात्राओं ने विभिन्न स्पर्धा में भाग लिया। इसके विजेताओं को नेताजी जयंती पर 23 जनवरी को पुरस्कृत किया जाएगा। समिति के अध्यक्ष तापस चटर्जी ने बताया कि नेताजी की जयंती का आयोजन समिति द्वारा वर्ष 2007 से लगातार इस तरह का आयोजन किया जा रहा है। प्रतियोगिता को सफल बनाने में शिल्पी सरकार, मृणाल कांति विश्वास, संजय बोस, उत्तम सिन्हा, किरण कुमार सहित सदस्य सक्रिय रहे।

झामुमो ने सनातन माझी की मनाई जयंती

JAMSHEDPUR : झामुमो, पूर्वी सिंहभूम की जिला समिति ने रविवार को पूर्व विधायक सनातन माझी की 84वीं जयंती मनाई। पुराना कोर्ट स्थित जिला संपर्क कार्यालय में हुए कार्यक्रम में सभी ने स्व. माझी की तस्वीर पर श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित किया। इस दौरान शेख बरकद्दीन, प्रमोद लाल, अरुण प्रसाद, प्रीतम हेंब्रम, गुरमीत सिंह गिल, खुदु उरांव, फैजाद खान, बुधई रजक, रेहान अंसारी, राजा सिंह, रानू मंडल, नानुद सरकार, अजय रजक, विनोद डे, विकास गोप आदि उपस्थित थे।

डालसा ने मंडल कारा के बंदियों से की मुलाकात



CHAIBASA : झारखंड राज्य विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार रांची के निर्देशानुसार 90 दिवसीय विधिक सेवा जागरूकता अभियान के अंतर्गत जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकार, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम चाईबासा के पदाधिकारियों ने मंडल कारा के बंदियों से मुलाकात की। एलएडीसी के प्रमुख सुरेंद्र प्रसाद, उपप्रमुख सुरेंद्र प्रसाद दास व सहायक एलएडीसी रंजेश कुमार ने बताया कि उन्होंने बंदियों का हालचाल लिया और ऐसे बंदियों का पता लगाने का प्रयास किया, जिनके पास अधिवक्ता नहीं है। प्राधिकार के सचिव राजीव कुमार सिंह ने बताया कि प्राधिकार ऐसे बंदी, जिनके पास अधिवक्ता न हों या परिवार के लोग भी उनसे मिलने नहीं आते हैं।

वरिष्ठ नागरिकों ने सांसद को सुनाई समस्या, दिए सुझाव



कार्यक्रम में उपस्थित सांसद बिद्युत बरण महतो व अन्य

JAMSHEDPUR : साकची स्थित गांधी घाट में रविवार को सांसद बिद्युत बरण महतो पहुंचे, जहां सिंहभूम केन्द्रीय वरिष्ठ नागरिक समिति के कार्यक्रम में शामिल हुए। इस दौरान संस्था के केन्द्रीय अध्यक्ष शिवपूजन सिंह ने कहा कि वरिष्ठ नागरिकों को देतों में पूर्ववत् छूट मिलनी चाहिए। बुजुर्गों को स्वास्थ के लिए जो सुविधा 70 वर्ष में मिलती है, उसे 60 वर्ष किया जाए। वैसे बेटे, जो बुढ़ापे में मां बाप की देखभाल नहीं करते हैं, उसे मां-बाप की प्रॉपर्टी से बेदखल कर देना चाहिए।

उहरे टुसु परब में बंगाल-ओडिशा से भी जुटे छऊ सहित कई विधाओं के कलाकार, मोहा मन

साकची से मानगो तक गूंजते रहे टुसु के पारंपरिक गीत

PHOTON NEWS JSR :

वृहद झारखंड कला सांस्कृतिक मंच की ओर से लगातार दूसरे वर्ष आयोजित उहरे टुसु परब में टुसु की रौनक ने शहरवासियों को सम्मोहित कर दिया। डिमना चौक से शुरू हुआ यह आयोजन मानगो के डिमना रोड से साकची के आमबगान मैदान तक गया। इस दौरान वाहनों पर टुसु के कलाकार अपने गीतों की प्रस्तुति कर रहे थे, सड़क पर छऊ व टुसु नृत्य का प्रदर्शन कर रहे थे। इस कार्यक्रम में जमशेदपुर सहित पूर्वी सिंहभूम जिले भर से तो लोग आए ही थे, बंगाल व ओडिशा से भी कलाकारों की टोली के साथ स्थानीय मूलवासी भी काफी संख्या में शामिल थे। गीत-संगीत की धुन पर उत्सव में शामिल लोग नाचते-गाते और झूमते हुए आमबगान मैदान पहुंचे।



साकची में छऊ नृत्य प्रस्तुत करते कलाकार व शोभायात्रा में शामिल लोगों की भीड़

अधिकांश लोग पारंपरिक वेशभूषा में आए थे। पूरा जमशेदपुर पीले रंग से सरावोर दिख रहा था। ढोल-मांदर के ताल पर छऊ नृत्य पर सभी लोग झूम रहे थे। हालांकि इसकी वजह से डिमना रोड, ओल्ड पुरुलिया रोड, डिमना रोड सहित पूरे मानगो और साकची क्षेत्र में जाम की स्थिति रही। शाम करीब चार बजे के बाद यातायात सामान्य हुआ।

सारंडा में 3 किलो का आईईडी बरामद, जंगल में ही किया नष्ट

नक्सलियों की तलाश में चलाए जा रहे सर्च ऑपरेशन के दौरान सुरक्षाबलों की पड़ी नजर

PHOTON NEWS CHAIBASA :

पश्चिमी सिंहभूम जिले के नक्सल प्रभावित सारंडा वन क्षेत्र में नक्सली संगठनों के खिलाफ सुरक्षाबलों द्वारा चलाए जा रहे सर्च ऑपरेशन के दौरान 3 किलो का आईईडी बरामद हुआ, जिसे सुरक्षाबलों ने जंगल में ही विस्फोट करके नष्ट कर दिया। जानकारी के अनुसार पश्चिमी सिंहभूम जिले के नक्सल प्रभावित क्षेत्र में प्रतिबंधित नक्सली संगठनों के खिलाफ पुलिस को सूचना मिली थी कि नक्सली संगठन का शीर्ष नेता मिसिर बेसरा, अनल, अनमोल, अश्वनी, परिराम माझी अपने दस्ते के साथ सारंडा क्षेत्र में भ्रमणशील होने की सूचना प्राप्त हुई थी। सूचना पाते ही सुरक्षा बलों की अलग-अलग टीम गठित की गई, जिसने नक्सलियों के खिलाफ अभियान छेड़ रखा है। रविवार को टोन्टो थाना क्षेत्र के सीमावर्ती



घटनास्थल पर मिला आईईडी

फोटोन न्यूज

पहाड़ी और जंगली क्षेत्र में सर्च ऑपरेशन चलाया गया था। सर्च अभियान के दौरान सारजोमबुरु और लोवाबेरा बीच जंगली-पहाड़ी क्षेत्र में सुरक्षा बलों को लक्षित करने के उद्देश्य से नक्सलियों द्वारा पूर्व में लगाए गए एक आईईडी बम बरामद कर सुरक्षा के दृष्टिकोण से उसी स्थान पर बम निरोधक दस्ता के सहायता से नष्ट कर दिया गया। जात हो कि सारंडा वन क्षेत्र में

मिसिर बेसरा सहित लगभग आधा दर्जन नक्सली कमांडर अपने गिरोह के साथ घूम रहे हैं। इस तरह की सूचना सुरक्षाबलों को लंबे समय से लगातार मिल रही है, लेकिन अभी तक ये इनके हाथ नहीं आए हैं। हालांकि, हाल के दिनों में नक्सली गतिविधियां काफी कम हुई हैं, लेकिन सुरक्षाबल इन्हें खत्म करने का लक्ष्य लेकर चल रहे हैं।



पुलिस ने 4.5 एकड़ में लगी अफीम की फसल को किया नष्ट

CHAKRADHARPUR : पश्चिमी सिंहभूम जिले के नक्सल प्रभावित क्षेत्र में अभियान चलाकर घने जंगल के बीच 4.5 एकड़ में लगी अफीम की फसल को ट्रैक्टर चलाकर नष्ट किया। घटना के संबंध में मिली जानकारी के अनुसार, रविवार को बंदगांव थाना के पुलिस बल की मौजूदगी में नक्सल प्रभावित जंगलों में अवैध अफीम की खेती के विरुद्ध कार्रवाई करते हुए बंदगांव थाना अंतर्गत ग्राम मुरुबरा में करीब 4 एकड़ में लगे पोस्तो की खेती पर ट्रैक्टर चलाकर नष्ट किया गया। वही, रविवार को ही टैबो थाना क्षेत्र में 50 डिसमिल में लगी अफीम को ग्रामीणों ने नष्ट किया।

सड़क दुर्घटना में बुजुर्ग की मौत, एक घायल

GHATSILA : गालुडीह थाना क्षेत्र के पुतर गांव स्थित गंगा होटल के समीप एनएच-18 पर रविवार की दोपहर हुई सड़क दुर्घटना में एक बुजुर्ग की मौत पर ही मौत हो गई। इसमें बाइक सवार गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गया। बताया जाता है कि उलटा पंचायत के बेड़ाहातु गांव निवासी पशुपति महतो (70) नवकुंज मंदिर दारीसाई में आयोजित भूमिपूजन कार्यक्रम से पैदल अपने घर बेड़ाहातु लौट रहे थे। इस दौरान जमशेदपुर की ओर जा रहे उलटा गांव निवासी बाइक सवार सगुन हांसदा की बाइक गलत दिशा से आ रही एक ऑटो से टकरा गई। इस क्रम में अनियंत्रित बाइक सवार ने बुजुर्ग को जोरदार टक्कर मार दिया, जिससे बुजुर्ग की घटनास्थल पर ही मौत हो गई। बाइक चालक



अस्पताल में इलाजरत घायल

सगुन हांसदा भी गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गया। जिला परिषद के सदस्य सुभाष सिंह एवं स्थानीय लोगों ने पुतर टोल प्लाजा के एंबुलेंस से दोनों को अनुमंडल अस्पताल भेजा। चिकित्सक डॉ. आरएन टुडू ने बुजुर्ग को मृत घोषित कर दिया, जबकि घायल को एमजीएम अस्पताल, जमशेदपुर रेफर कर दिया। इस बीच ऑटो चालक फरार हो गया। घटना के बाद मृतक की पत्नी मालती महतो और पुत्र असित कुमार महतो का रो-रोकर बुरा हाल हो गया।

आदिवासी मित्र मंडल में हुई मागे व बाहा पोरोब की तैयारी



CHAKRADHARPUR : आदिवासी मित्र मंडल में रविवार को बैठक हुई, जिसमें मागे व बाहा पोरोब के आयोजन की तैयारी पर चर्चा की गई। बैठक में मैदान की सफाई कराने, रसीद बूट और निमंत्रण पत्र छापाने का निर्णय लिया गया। मारंग गोमक जयपाल सिंह मुंडा के नाम वीक का नामकरण 3 जनवरी को किया गया। इसे आदिवासी समाज के प्रति एक सम्मानजनक कदम माना गया। इसमें 4 जनवरी को जमशेदपुर में दिनकर कच्छ एवं अन्य क्रांतिकारी साक्षियों की पुलिस द्वारा की गई मारपीट की कड़ी निंदा की गई। बैठक में यह कहा गया कि इस प्रकार की घटनाएं आदिवासी समुदाय और सरकार के बीच विश्वास को कमजोर करती हैं। पुलिस द्वारा की गई यह हिंसा न केवल एक व्यक्तिगत घटना है, बल्कि पूरे आदिवासी समाज की चिंता का विषय है।

गुरु गोविन्द सिंह जी से प्रेरणा लें



गोबिंद राय से गोविन्द सिंह रख लिया ।पहाड़ी राजाओं से युद्ध- गुरु जी की बढ़ती हुई सैनिक शक्ति को देखकर कई पहाड़ी राजे उनके शत्रु .बन गए । पाऊंटा दुर्ग के पास भंगानी के स्थान पर फतेह शाह ने गुरु जी पर आक्रमण कर दिया ।सिक्ख बड़ी वीरता से लड़े ।अन्त में गुरु जी विजयी रहे ।नादौन का युद्ध- जम्मु के सूबेदार मिर्या खाँ ने अपने सेनापति आलिफ खां को पहाड़ी राजा भीमचन्द से कर (टैक्स) लेने के लिए भेजा,कर देने से इकार करने पर आलिफ खाँ ने भीमचन्द पर हमला कर दिया । गुरु जी भीमचन्द की सहायता के लिए पहुंचे । आलिफ खां युद्ध में मारा गया । इसे नादौन का युद्ध कहते हैं आनन्दपुर छोड़ना- औरंगजेब ने गुरु जी की शक्ति समाप्त करने का निश्चय किया । उन्हें लाहौर और सरहिन्द के सूबेदारों को गुरु जी पर आक्रमण करने का हुक्म दिया । गुरु जी ने किला छोड़ दिया पर शत्रु सेना ने विश्वासघात किया । उसने गुरु जी पर आक्रमण कर दिया । गुरु जी को काफी हानि उठानी पड़ी ।चमकौर का युद्ध 1704 में 21, 22, और 23 दिसम्बर को गुरु गोविंद सिंह और मुगलों की सेना के बीच चुनौत के चमकौर में लड़ा गया था। गुरु गोबिंद सिंह जी 20 दिसम्बर की रात आनंद पुर साहिब छोड़ कर 21 दिसम्बर की शाम को चमकौर पहुंचे थे, और उनके पीछे मुगलों की एक विशाल सेना जिसका नेतृत्व वजीर खां कर रहा था, भी 22 दिसम्बर की सुबह तक चमकौर पहुँच गयी थी।23 दिसम्बर को गुरु गोविंद सिंह और मुगलों की सेना के बीच चमकौर में युद्ध लड़ा गया था वजीर खां गुरु गोबिंद सिंह को जीवित या मृत पकड़ना चाहता था। चमकौर के इस युद्ध में गुरु गोबिंद सिंह की सेना में केवल उनके दो बड़े साहिबजादे अजीत सिंह एवं जुझार सिंह और 40 अन्य सिंह थे। इन 43 लोगों ने मिलकर ही वजीर खां की पूरी सेना का विनाश कर दिया था।वजीर खान किसी भी सूरत में गुरु गोविंद सिंह जी को ज़िंदा या मर्दा पकड़ना चाहता था क्योंकि औरंगजेब की लाख कोशिशों के बावजूद गुरु गोविंद सिंह मुगलों की अधीनता स्वीकार नहीं कर रहे थे। लेकिन गुरु गोविंद सिंह के दो बेटों सहित 40 सिक्खों ने गुरूजी के आशीर्वाद और अपनी वीरता से वजीर खान को अपने मंसूखो में कामयाब नहीं होने दिया और 10 लाख मुगल सैनिक भी गुरु गोविंद सिंह जी को नहीं पकड़ पाए। यह युद्ध इतिहास में सिक्खों की वीरता और उनकी अनेक शक्त के प्रति आस्था के लिए जाना जाता है नवाब वजीर खां ने माता गुजरी और दोनों छोटे साहिबजादों बाबा जोरावर सिंह और फतेह सिंह बहुत अत्याचार किए और धर्म बदलने के लिए कहा। लेकिन इन्होंने ऐसा करने से इनकार कर दिया। उस समय बाबा जोरावर मात्र 7 और बाबा फतेहसिंह 9 साल के थे। गुस्सा होकर वजीर खान ने 26 दिसंबर 1705 को दोनों

साहिबजादों को दीवार में ज़िंदा चुनवा दिया। जब ये बात माता गुजरी को पता चली तो उन्होंने भी अपना शरीर त्याग दिया।गुरु गोबिंद सिंह का जन्म भारत में ऐसे समय में हुआ था जब लोग राजनीतिक रूप से विभाजित, धार्मिक रूप से पतित और आर्थिक रूप से शोषित थे। उन्होंने एक नए वैचारिक युग को शुरूआत की और अपने देश के निष्क्रिय और सुस्त लोगों को जीवन के प्रति एक सशक्त दृष्टिकोण से उत्साहित किया। हिंदू पंजाब में एक राजनीतिक शक्ति नहीं रह गए थे जो मुगलों के अत्याचारी शासन की चोपट में था। हिंदू सौम्य और विनम्र थे, और अपने विश्वास के प्रति कठोर थे और उन्हें अपने आहत सम्मान और मर्दानगी को सही ठहराने के लिए एक बहादुर भावना से ओतप्रोत होना पड़ा। पुरुषोत्तम निज्ञावन के अनुसार, यद्यपि नानक मनुष्य और मुनुष गोविंद सिंह के बीच की सभी भेदों को मिटा रहे थे, फिर भी उन्होंने स्वयं को भारतीय जड़ों से अलग नहीं किया... जबकि इस्लाम आम तौर पर शुद्धतावादी है, हिंदू धर्म में ऐसे क्षेत्र हैं जिनमें अत्यधिक तपस्या और आत्म-पीड़ा का अग्र्यास किया जाता है। लेकिन दोनों को अस्वीकार करते हुए, नानक सहज योग में चले गए... और बुद्ध की तरह, उन्होंने अपने अनुयायियों के लिए जीवन का एक मजबूत नैतिक और नैतिक कोड निर्धारित किया।। गुरु नानक और मुनुष गोविंद सिंह के अन्य पूर्ववर्तियों ने हिंदुओं की नैतिकता को काफी ऊंचा किया था, लेकिन उन्हें उच्च राजनीतिक आकांक्षाओं के साथ प्रेरित करने और अपने राष्ट्र के लिए लड़ने का काम गुरु गोविंद सिंह के लिए अपरिश्त था। उन्हें अपने राष्ट्र को मौजूदा शासन के राजनीतिक अत्याचार और धार्मिक असहिष्णुता के खिलाफ खड़ा करने के लिए तैयार करना था। कनिंघम कहते हैं, गुरु एक दार्शनिक थे, और पूरी तरह से समझते थे कि पुरुषों की कल्पना को कैसे प्रभावित किया जा सकता है। वे मनोविज्ञान के बारे में बहुत कुछ जानते थे। उन्होंने महसूस किया कि हिंदू स्वभाव से बहुत ही सौम्य हैं और उनमें धार्मिक विचार तो हैं, लेकिन राष्ट्रीय भावनाएँ नहीं हैं। उनके लिए राष्ट्र बनाने का एकमात्र तरीका राष्ट्रवाद को अपना धर्म बनाना था। वे जानते थे कि राष्ट्रवाद का पहला तत्व एकता है। उन्होंने धर्म को सार्वभौमिक भाईचारे के रूप में देखा और घोषणा की कि कोई भी व्यक्ति अपने आपको सच्चा सिख नहीं कह सकता, जब तक कि वह जातिगत पूर्वाग्रहों को न छोड़े। इस तरह कुछ ही दिनों में गुरु गोविंद सिंह के चारों बेटों ने देश और धर्म की राह पर चलते हुए अपनी कुबानी दे दी। पंजाब के मैदानों की हलचल से दूर होने के बावजूद, पौंटा और आनंदपुर दोनों ही महत्वपूर्ण व्यापार और तीर्थयात्रा मार्गों पर स्थित थे। 19 हिंदू अपने मुक्कों के अवशेषों को हरिद्वार में पवित्र नदी गंगा में विसर्जित करने के लिए पौंटा में यमुना पर पहुंचते थे, और हिंदू और जैन भक्त नैना देवी और ज्वालामुखी में देवी मंदिरों और कांगड़ा में आदि नाथ मंदिर की तीर्थयात्रा करते समय आनंदपुर से गुजरते थे। ये

मार्ग कश्मीर और पंजाब के बीच और इसके माध्यम से दिल्ली और यमुना और गंगा नदियों के बीच के क्षेत्र में व्यापार को भी बढ़ावा देते थे।हमारे पास सत्रहवीं शताब्दी की शुरूआत में एक यूरोपीय व्यक्ति द्वारा हरिद्वार से ज्वालामुखी की यात्रा करने का विवरण है, और इस मार्ग से होने वाले अधिकांश व्यापार के अन्य संदर्भ भी हैं। इस प्रकार पौंटा और आनंदपुर के स्थानों ने सिखों को यात्रियों, उनके द्वारा लाए गए सामान और उनके निपटान में अन्य संसाधनों तक आसान पहुंच प्रदान की। पौंटा और आनंदपुर का लेआउट उस समय की सिख चिंताओं को महत्वपूर्ण तरीकों से दर्शाता है। पौंटा में, सिख प्रतिष्ठान एक पहाड़ी की चोटी पर था, जो यमुना नदी को पार करने वाले लोगों का सर्वेक्षण करता था। इस सुविधाजनक स्थान से, वे नदी पर मार्ग को नियंत्रित कर सकते थे, जबकि किसी के लिए भी उच्च ऊंचाई पर स्थित उनके आधार पर हमला करना आसान नहीं था। हमारे पास सिखों द्वारा घाट पर यातायात की निगरानी, प्रवेश और पहुँच के मुद्दों पर निर्णय लेने और सत्ता की इस स्थिति से उत्पन्न चुनौतियों के शुरूआती संदर्भ हैं। ये मुद्दे तब और अधिक ध्यान में आते हैं जब हम आनंदपुर को देखते हैं। गढ़वाल के प्रमुख के खिलाफ अपनी जीत के बाद, क्षेत्र में एक शक्तिशाली व्यक्ति जिसके पूर्वजों ने सदियों तक बनारस पर शासन किया था, गुरु पंजाब की पहाड़ियों में अपने पैतृक अधिकार की सीट पर लौट आए। आनंदपुर की स्थापना 1684 में हुई थी या 1688 में, यह पूरी तरह स्पष्ट नहीं है, लेकिन हम यह निश्चित रूप से जानते हैं कि 1690 के दशक में यह एक संपन्न शहर था। इसे घाटी के पूर्वी छोर पर पहाड़ियों पर बनाया गया था। गुरु के आवासीय क्वार्टर इसके केंद्र में थे। ये पौंटा के दिनों के उनके युद्ध-परीक्षित योद्धाओं के घरों से घिरे थे। भारत ी उच्च स्थान नामक एक स्थान का समकालीन संदर्भ है, जहाँ गुरु ने अपना दरबार लगाया था। पूरी संभावना है कि समुदाय का नाम बदलकर खालसा पंथ रखने की घोषणा यहीं से जारी की गई थी, और चूँकि उस समय से सिखों को अपने बाल (केश) बिना कटें रखने थे, इसलिए उस स्थान पर बने किले को केसगढ़ (बालों का किला) के रूप में जाना जाता था।

यह पश्चिमी न्यायपूर्ण युद्ध सिद्धांत में निहित विचारों के समान है। सिखों का यह भी मानना ​​है कि संधियों और युद्ध विराम का सम्मान किया जाना चाहिए, पूजा स्थलों (किसी भी धर्म के) को नुकसान नहीं पहुंचाना जाना चाहिए, और आत्मसमर्पण करने वाले सैनिकों को नुकसान नहीं पहुंचाया जाना चाहिए। न्यायपूर्ण युद्ध सिद्धांत से महत्वपूर्ण अंतर यह है कि सिखों का मानना ​​है कि, यदि कोई युद्ध न्यायपूर्ण है, तो उसे तब भी लड़ा जाना चाहिए, जब उस जीता न जा सके। सिखों से उत्पीड़न के विरुद्ध सैन्य कार्रवाई करने की अपेक्षा की जाती है, और सिखों में पूर्ण शांतिवाद की कोई आधुनिक परंपरा नहीं है, हालांकि सिख धर्मों और राज्यों के बीच मानवाधिकारों और सद्भाव को बढ़ावा देने के लिए कार्रवाई के प्रबल समर्थक हैं। वर्तमान जीवन सबसे आधुनिक शिक्षा की माँग करता है। और मानवीय विज्ञान भी आजकल आमूलचूल परिवर्तन से गुजर रहे हैं, जो खुद को आधुनिक समस्याओं और सामाजिक आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप बदल रहे हैं। यह समझा जाता है कि भारतीय विरवविद्यालय, कॉलेज और अन्य शैक्षणिक संस्थान हमारे युवाओं और छात्रों को हमारे देश के विकास के एक और चरण के लिए तैयार करने के लिए आगे आ रहे हैं, जो वैश्वीकरण और वैश्विक जीवन के नाम से जाना जाता है। गुरु गोबिंद सिंह का निधन 7 अक्टूबर 1708 को हुआ और उनका अंतिम संस्कार नदिड़ में किया गया, जहां नदिड़ साहिब गुरुद्वारा स्थित है और आगे और प्रौद्योगिकी के विकसित बुनियादी ढांचे, नई कार्य नैतिकता और नई उद्यमशीलता की भावना और धन के वितरण की संशोधित सामाजिक नीति के साथ, वास्तव में 21वीं सदी की दहलीज पर, कोई भी देश वैश्विक प्रक्रियाओं से अलग नहीं रह सकता है।

संपादकीय

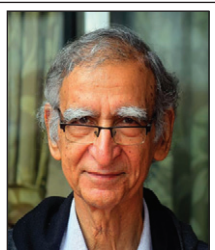
खतरे की घंटी

केंद्रीय भूझजल बोर्ड ने कहा है, देश के 440 जिलों के भूजल में नाइट्रेट की सांद्रता अनुमेय सीमा से अधिक है। नाइट्रेट संदूषण पर्यावरण व स्वास्थ्य के महेनजर गंभीर चिंता का विषय है। भूजल गुणवत्ता के नमूनों में फ्लोराइड व आर्सेनिक संदूषण भी सुरक्षित सीमा से अधिक पाया गया। नाइट्रोजन आधारित उर्वरकों व पशु अपशिष्टों का उपयोग करने वाले कृषि क्षेत्रों में मिट्टी की गहराई तक पहुंच जाता है। मानसून से पहले व बाद में पंद्रह हजार से ज्यादा गुणवत्ता मांपने के नमूने लिये गए थे। राजस्थान, कर्नाटक, तमिलनाडु, महाराष्ट्र, तेलंगाना, आंध्र व मप्र के नमूनों में उच्च संदूषण था, जबकि उप्र, केरल, झारखंड व बिहार में कम प्रतिशत था। उच्च नाइट्रेट स्तर शिशुओं में ब्लू बेबी सिंड्रोम जैसी स्वास्थ्य समस्याएं पैदा करता है। फ्लोराइड और आर्सेनिक प्रदूषकों के संपर्क में लंबे समय तक रहने वालों की सेहत पर गंभीर परिणाम हो सकते हैं, जिसमें कैंसर व त्वचा के गहरे घाव शामिल हैं। राजस्थान व पंजाब के नमूनों में यूरेनियम की मात्रा अधिक पायी गई, जिसके संपर्क से गुर्दे की क्षति हो सकती है। भूजल में ये विषाक्तता रोकने के तत्काल प्रयास किए जाने जरूरी हैं। जल से होने वाले संक्रमणों व कैंसर तथा गृह के गंभीर रोगों की चपेट में आने वालों या इनके चलते अल्पायु में ही मौत की बढ़ती संख्या को देखते हुए सरकार को फौरन चेत जाना चाहिए। अभी भी देश के प्रत्येक नागरिक को शुद्ध जल मुहैया करवाने के प्रति सरकार तनिक भी जागरूक नहीं है। विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन के अनुसार लगभग अस्सी फीसद रोगों का कारण जल है। पर्यावरण प्रदूषण का असर जल पर भी पड़ता है। औद्योगिकीकरण तथा अपशिष्टों का उचित निपटान न होने से भूमि व जल दोनों ही बुरी तरह प्रभावित होते हैं।

चिंतन-मनन

माँ है तो सबकुछ है

माँ एक गुरु के रूप में अपनी संतान को संस्कार देती है। माता जीवन का निर्माण करती है, तो पिता उसे उन्नति के शिखर तक ले जाता है। माँ है तो सबकुछ है और यदि माँ नहीं तो कुछ भी नहीं। जो अपनी माँ को प्रसन्न रखता है, वह उसके आशीर्वाद का वरदान भी पाता है। ऐसी परम उपकारी धन-वैभव का अहंकार करता है, परंतु वह अंत में धराशायी हो जाता है। जिसके जीवन में विनय का गुण है, वह ज्ञान प्राप्त कर सकता है। माँ एक गुरु के रूप में अपनी संतान को संस्कार देती है। माता जीवन का निर्माण करती है, तो पिता उसे उन्नति के शिखर तक ले जाता है। माँ है तो सबकुछ है और यदि माँ नहीं तो कुछ भी नहीं।



राम पुनियानी

अपने गठन के बाद से ही आरएसएस ऐसी अनेक संस्थाओं का निर्माण करता आया है जो हिंदुत्व या हिन्दू राष्ट्रवाद की उसकी विचारधारा को आगे बढ़ाने का काम करती हैं। हिंदुत्व की अवधारणा आर्य नस्ल, ब्राह्मणवादी मूल्यों और सिन्धु नदी से लेकर समुद्र तक की भूमि के आर्यावर्त होने पर आधारित है। आरएसएस ने जिन संगठनों और संस्थाओं को जन्म दिया है, उनकी संख्या 100 से ज्यादा है। इसके अलावा अनेक ऐसे संगठन हैं जो भले ही औपचारिक रूप से संघ परिवार के सदस्य न हों, मगर वे उसकी विचारधारा में रचे-बसे हैं। इनमें साधु-संतों के अनेक संगठनों व गौरक्षकों के समूहों सहित ऐसे अनेक गिरोह शामिल हैं जो हिन्दू धर्म के नाम पर हिंसा करने के मौकों की तलाश में रहते हैं। अब ऐसे कई संगठन अस्तित्व में आ चुके हैं जो अत्यंत आक्रामक हैं और जो आरएसएस द्वारा उसके अनुयायियों के लिए निर्धारित लक्ष्यपरेखा को पार करने में तनिक भी संकोच नहीं करते। गौरक्षकों को संबोधित करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने कहा था कि वाप के नाम पर मनुष्यों की हत्या स्वीकार्य नहीं है। उनके इस वक्तव्य के कुछ ही घंटे बाद, इसी मुद्दे पर एक मुसलमान को मौत की घाट उतार दिया गया। इसी तर्ज पर, प्रधानमंत्री ने क्रिसमस की पूर्वसंध्या पर कहा कि हूडूम, सीहार्द और भाईचारा, ईसा मसीह के शिक्षाओं का केन्द्रीय तत्व हैं।हू उन्होंने लोगों का आह्वान किया वे इन मूल्यों को मजबूती दें। इसके कुछ ही दिन बाद, बजरंग दल के सदस्यों और हिन्दू धर्म के अन्य स्व-नियुक्त ठेकेदारों ने अहमदाबाद में सांता क्लॉस के भेष में उपहार बाँट रहे एक व्यक्ति पर हमला किया। सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल एक वीडियो में दिखाया गया है कि अहमदाबाद के कांकरिया कॉलेजल में सांता क्लॉस



की वेशभूषा पहने दो लोगों की गुंडों ने जबरदस्त पिटाई की। यह शायद पहली बार है कि सांता क्लॉस का भेष धरे लोगों पर हमले हो रहे हैं। इसके पहले कैरोल गायकों पर हमले हो चुके हैं। भाजपा के सत्ता में आने के बाद से राष्ट्रपति भवन में कैरोल गायन की परंपरा बंद कर दी गई है। बजरंग दल हिन्दुओं को क्रिसमस पार्टियों में भाग न लेने की चेतावनियाँ जारी कर चुका है। इस बार क्रिसमस पर ये सब हरकतें कुछ कम क्यों हुई? हाल में हमने हर मस्जिद के नीचे मंदिर खोजने के अभियान का आगाज भी देखा है, जो बाबरी मस्जिद को ढहाए जाने की याद दिलाता है। इस तरह के काल्पनिक दावों के ज्वार के बाद आरएसएस के मुखिया मोहन भागवत ने भी कहा कि हमें हर मस्जिद के एक ढांचे को शिवलिंग बताया जा रहा है और मस्जिद की मंदिर में बदलने की मांग हो रही है। उत्तरप्रदेश के संभल में ऐसे ही दावों के बाद हिंसा हो चुकी है। शायद इस सब ने देश की सबसे बड़ी राजनैतिक संस्था के शीर्ष नेता को झकझोर दिया है। या फिर शायद उन्हें यह लग रहा है कि इससे संघ परिवार की छवि खराब होगी। इसलिए उन्होंने एक ऐसा आह्वान किया जो समझदारीपूर्ण लगता है। उन्होंने कहा कि हूआयिया के राममंदिर का सम्बन्ध आस्था से था और हिन्दू इस मंदिर का निर्माण चाहते थे। मगर सिर्फ नफरत के कारण नए स्थानों के बारे में विवाद खड़े करना अस्वीकार्य है।हू उन्होंने यह भी जोड़ा कि हूकुछ लोग समझते हैं कि नए विवाद खड़े कर वे

हिन्दुओं के नेता बन सकते हैं। इसकी इजाजत कैसे दी जा सकती है।हू मगर इसके बाद एक चमत्कार हुआ। हिंदुत्व की राजनीति से जुड़े कई संगठनों ने भागवत की इस समझाईश का विरोध किया। हम सब जानते हैं कि आरएसएस में सख्त अनुशासन होता है और उसके सदस्य कभी अपने शीर्ष नेता के आदेशों का उल्लंघन नहीं करते। तो फिर यह कैसे हो रहा है कि दर्जनों सेनाएं और धर्म संसदें भागवत की अपील के खिलाफ बात और काम कर रही हैं? इससे भी बड़ी बात यह है कि आरएसएस के अनाधिकारिक मुखपत्र हूआगेनॉइजरहू ने भी अतिवादिशों की मांग का समर्थन करते हुए लिखा कि, हूमंदिरों की पुनर्स्थापना, हमारी पहचान की खोज है।हू (द टाइम्स ऑफ इंडिया, दिसम्बर 27, 2024)। उसने यह भी लिखा कि मंदिरों की पुनर्स्थापना का उद्देश्य हमारी राष्ट्रीय पहचान स्थापित करना और सभ्यतागत न्याय हासिल करना है। क्या नफरत सचमुच इतनी गहरी है कि अनुयायी अपने नेताओं की बात भी नहीं सुन रहे हैं? या क्या नेन्द्रे मोदी जैसे नेता चाहते हैं कि नफरत भड़काने वाली हरकतें होतीं रहें क्योंकि इनसे उनकी राजनीति को मजबूती मिलती है? अगर ऐसा नहीं है तो हिंसा करने वालों के खिलाफ कार्यवाही क्यों नहीं होती? क्या कारण है कि कानून और व्यवस्था बनाये रखने वाली मशीन से लेकर कुछ हद तक न्यायपालिका तक का उन तत्वों के प्रति नर्म रख है जो नफरत फैलाते हैं और हिंसा करते हैं? बाबरी मस्जिद को जमींदोज करने वालों के खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई। गाय और गौमांस के नाम पर

लिंचिंग करने वाले खुले घूम रहे हैं। लव-जिहाद के नाम पर हत्याएं और हमले करने वालों का बाल भी बांका नहीं हुआ है। जाहिर है कि ऐसे तत्वों को यह पता है कि वे आसानी से कानून तोड़ सकते हैं। वे जानते हैं कि कानून को तोड़मरोड़ कर उनका बचाव किया जाएगा।

हूआगेनॉइजरहू द्वारा भागवत का विरोध मन में एक जिज्ञासा पैदा करता है। क्या आरएसएस विभाजित हो गया है? यह कैसे हो रहा है कि भागवत शांति और सीहार्द की बात कर रहे हैं और हूआगेनॉइजरहू के कर्ताधर्ता चाहते हैं कि नफरत और हिंसा की राह पर तेजी से आगे बढ़ा जाए?

एक और पक्ष को समझने की जरूरत है। जब इस तरह की सच को राजनैतिक लाभ के लिए बढ़ावा दिया जाता है और इससे चुनावों में फायदा होता है तो शुरूआत में तो नेताओं की खुशी होती है। मगर फिर, जो बीज नेताओं ने बोये होते हैं, उनसे कई नए तत्व उग आते हैं और जैसा कि भागवत ने कहा, उनमें से कुछ राजनैतिक पद और प्रभाव हासिल करने की जड़ोजहद में जुट जाते हैं। हम सबको याद है कि जिस समय बाबरी मस्जिद गिराई जा रही थी, वरिष्ठ आरएसएस नेता के। सुदर्शन, जो आगे चल कर आरएसएस के मुखिया बने, मंच पर थे। इस अपराध की किसी को कोई सजा नहीं मिली। बाबरी मस्जिद के ढहाने वालों को निरपराध घोषित कर दिया गया और यह फैसला देने वाले जज को रिटायरमेंट के बाद एक महत्वपूर्ण पद मिला। एक पुरानी कथावत है कि हूजैसे बोआगे, वैया काटोणे।हू बाबरी मस्जिद की पूरी कथा से यह साफ है कि मंदिरों को तोड़ने के झूठे नैरेटिव फैलाने के अलावा, मुसलमानों के बारे में अनेक मिथक भी फैलाए गए। नतीजा हम सबके सामने है। आरएसएस के मुखिया की बात अब उनके ही समर्थक और अनुयायी सुनने को तैयार नहीं हैं। इसके अलावा, ईसाईयों के बारे में भी दशकों से यह प्रचार किया जा रहा है कि वे जोर-जबरदस्ती, धोखेबाजी और लोभ-लालच के जरिये धर्मपरिवर्तन करवा रहे हैं। मोदी, भागवत और उनके जैसे अन्यो को यह समझ में आ रहा होगा कि जिन् को बोलत से निकलना आसान है। उसे फिर से बोलत में बंद करना मुश्किल है। (अंग्रेजी से रूपांतरण अमरीश हरदेनिया। लेखक आईआईटी मुंबई में पढ़ाते थे और सन 2007 के नेशनल कयूनल हामोनी एवार्ड से सम्मानित है)

Two museums and a visitor

THE best new year gift you could give to yourself is to keep company with Bhupen Khakhar, J Swaminathan and KG Subramanyan. The absolutely fantastic part is you don’t have to share them with anyone. A Ramachandran loiters somewhere in the back. The brilliant Nalini Malani is immersed in her own world, so you don’t have to wonder about an invasion of privacy — watch where she’s hung, take a step back, gaze at her from all angles, including from the back.

You’ll find that all the oils on canvas are stuck on a piece of cardboard hung with twine on the wall. You feel the temptation slithering across the back of your spine, of wanting to do what you shouldn’t but you know you can. You must push it away.

It’s time to move on to the next modern master in the next gallery at the Museum of Fine Arts at Panjab University in Chandigarh. “How to steal a painting and get away with it” could easily be the subject of this column — except not. It’s all too precious. Also, perhaps, there’s something charming in the fact that most of the world has forgotten that these works even exist — they are certainly on no website — so when you come upon them in this serendipitous way, the thought crosses your mind. Yes, this could be your very own, private space where on special occasions like the new year you could break open a samosa or two. After all, Bhupen Khakhar’s work that’s hanging on the front wall is called ‘Breakfast in Kasauli’. Foodies would certainly applaud. There’s more. This building was designed by BP Mathur, an architect who worked with Pierre Jeanneret, the main architect-planner of the university. The collection of contemporary masters in the museum, about 1,200 artworks, was curated by none other than Chandigarh’s beloved son and internationally acclaimed art historian, BN Goswamy, who wrote a much-read column for The Tribune until he passed away a year ago. Moreover, I am now a card-carrying member of the City Beautiful. I realise I am in the presence of both History and Culture, both H & C capitalised.

Kulwinder strides in. His angry movements disturb the cold air of the gallery — so far it’s been just me and the masters. Ramachandran’s brooding painting of monks in a church seems like it’s part of the Andrei Rublyev school. The attendant, who prefers warming her hands on the heater in the reception area, tells me, “Bahut log aate hain museum main”, at least 10-12 every day. I ask Kulwinder if there is a guide. I don’t know, he replies sternly, “main technical se hoon”.

If Chandigarh is what Delhi was 40 years ago, then you can well imagine its museums — hidden jewels encrusted by sarkari indifference. The Government Museum and Art Gallery in Sector 10, designed by Le Corbusier himself, has that gorgeous wooden door that turns on a single pivot — you also see this large door in the conjoined Haryana-Punjab Legislative Assembly space that Corbu designed at one end of the Capitol Complex, itself a magnificent plaza that should have been teeming with happy people and moonghphali-wallahs in the winter but has, instead, been turned into an exclusive zone in the name of security, which means only VVIPs and registered visitors have access — but the real experience begins when you go through the Corbu door into the Government Museum. The only available brochures are in French. (Corbusier was Swiss-French, so those folks come, it seems.) The English ones “are finished”. The guide — her name is Geetanjali — walks up the ramp with me. On one wall hangs a gorgeous rope installation by Mrinal Mukherjee, except the bottom is frayed. You reach the first floor and are immediately stunned by the bronzes, the Sanghol excavations, the Gandhara sculptures and the Pahari paintings in the rooms beyond. Seems MS Randhawa, widely acknowledged as Chandigarh’s First Citizen, scoured the estates of the small princelings soon after Independence and requested them to part with their treasures so they could become the heart of the Art Museum. And that’s how BNG — as all of North India lovingly called BN Goswamy — revolutionised our understanding of our own heritage.

Highs and lows of Congress that 24 Akbar Road has seen

What is urgently needed is a vaccine that is effective before and after TB exposure, and in all age groups.

STILL smarting from its shock defeats in the Haryana and Maharashtra Assembly elections, the Congress is set to have a new address in the Capital in the new year. The inauguration of the new office of the grand old party had been delayed partly because the building was yet to get a ‘no-objection certificate’ from the Delhi municipal authorities. The other reason was more compelling. The party, facing an existential crisis, needed a ‘favourable celestial alignment’, which would apparently be in place on January 14, the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti. A plaque would be installed by party President Mallikarjun Kharge, one of the few Congress chiefs who is not from the Nehru-Gandhi family. The absence of a plaque at the present office — 24 Akbar Road — was the result of confusion among party members on the first day of January 1978. Nobody, including Indira Gandhi, had bothered about the stars and their influence on her politics. For the past nearly 46 years, 24 Akbar Road has served as the headquarters of the Indian National Congress. The new office address is Indira Bhawan on Deendayal Upadhyaya Marg, where the BJP already has an impressive headquarters.

However, the Congress, wary of having an office on a road named after RSS ideologue Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, apparently wants to use its back door as the main entrance, which is located on Feroz Shah Kotla Marg. With the Congress set to complete 140 years of its foundation on December 28 this year, here is a recap of how the party under Indira occupied 24 Akbar Road. It has witnessed many highs and lows since then. It was a chilly winter morning in January 1978 when Shoban Singh and 20 other karamcharis (workers) of the breakaway Congress faction headed by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi entered 24 Akbar Road.

A Type VII bungalow in Lutyens’ Delhi, 24 Akbar Road belonged to G Venkatswamy, a Congress MP from Andhra Pradesh. Venkatswamy had chosen to side with Indira when most party leaders had stayed away, fearing that proximity to her would invite retaliation from the then ruling Janata Party. It was a testing time for Indira and her party. She was herself



to private quarters in South Delhi. Incidentally, this was not 24 Akbar Road’s first brush with history. For two years beginning 1961, it played host to Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi was barely 15 when she arrived there with her mother Daw Khin Kyi, who had been appointed Myanmar’s ambassador to India.

24 Akbar Road was named Burma House by Jawaharlal Nehru in recognition of Daw Khin Kyi’s special status. The house, built by Sir Edwin Lutyens between 1911 and 1925, was regarded as a singularly fine example of British colonial architecture and a masterpiece of early Modernism.

After the 1969 party split, Indira’s breakaway Congress faction emerged as the ‘real Congress’ and she had no regrets about splitting the party over her choice of presidential nominee VV Giri against the old guard’s choice Neelam Sanjiva Reddy.

The Congress split of 1969 was significant on many counts. It led to Indira’s Congress losing control over 7 Jantar Mantar Road, where the party office had been housed since Independence. It moved first to 5 Rajendra Prasad Road in 1971 and then to 24 Akbar Road in 1978. The bitter split of 1978 had left the Indira Congress with absolutely nothing. The then office secretary, Sadiq Ali, had declined to hand over any official records, papers or books to Indira. So, the party no longer had any files, records, correspondence, stationery, flags or typewriters. Indira was greatly pained to lose her party’s invaluable archives. But when she returned to power with a thumping majority in 1980, like a true believer in destiny, she refused to stake claim on the old party office. “I have built the party from scratch, not once, but twice. The new office premises will rejuvenate the party rank and file for decades,” she told Sanjay, when her politician son broached the subject of returning to the old office.

Indira’s words proved prophetic. 24 Akbar Road provided a new lease of life to the Congress. Like emperor Akbar, 24 Akbar Road struggled in its nascent stages, but managed to stand on its feet in such a manner that it provided strength and stability for decades to come. In 2009, when the Congress was heading the UPA government at the Centre, none of the AICC general secretaries occupying the big rooms at 24 Akbar Road, except Rahul Gandhi, had won a parliamentary election. For decades, 24 Akbar Road has contributed little in terms of generating new ideas for the party’s agenda. These ‘non-accountable’ leaders often lacked the ideological clarity that the Congress was so proud of, and they were unable to come up with out-of-the-box ideas. These functionaries were only keen to kill or blunt any fresh initiative rather than help the party make collective use of the talent at its disposal.

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Congress President Kharge face the daunting task of reversing the party’s fortunes. Will the grand old party — which launched the nationwide ‘Jai Babu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan Abhiyan’ on Friday — find its feet at its new office or wilt under the might of the BJP? We will know the answer in due course.

Missing learners

Concerning drop in school enrolment



THE Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2023-24 data paints a concerning picture for India’s school education sector. A decline of 37 lakh students in school enrolment, dropping from 25.17 crore in 2022-23 to 24.80 crore, demands introspection and action. While some of this reduction reflects enhanced accuracy due to the Aadhaar-linked unique IDs, it exposes systemic challenges that go beyond data adjustments.

Alarmingly, the data reveals a sharp decline in girl enrolment and a persistent underrepresentation of minority and marginalised communities. States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra have witnessed the steepest enrolment drops, reflecting entrenched socio-economic barriers. Transition points, particularly from middle to secondary education, exacerbate dropout rates — rising from 5.2 per cent in middle school to 10.9 per cent at the secondary level. This is compounded by retention rates plummeting from 85.4 per cent to a mere 45.6 per cent. Infrastructure

deficiencies further hinder progress. High-enrolment states such as West Bengal and Punjab face critical gaps.

Plus, technological readiness is abysmal, with only about 57 per cent of schools equipped with functional computers. The digital divide continues to marginalise the most vulnerable students, undermining efforts for equitable education. Despite these challenges, there are silver linings. The introduction of unique educational IDs facilitates precise tracking of dropouts and better targeting of schemes like Samagra Shiksha. However, progress demands more than data — it requires transformative policy action. Investments in teacher training, digital infrastructure and community outreach are vital. As the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aspires for universal education by 2030, India must ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all. The future of millions of young learners depends on bridging the gap between aspiration and implementation.

A case for Make America & India Great Again

If US investors channel funds towards Indian firms capable of carrying out cutting-edge R and D, the US could reap the benefits of innovation without increasing immigration flows.

PERHAPS it should not be surprising that India should feature so prominently in the “civil war” that has emerged within US President-elect Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” (MAGA) movement. Surprising or not, that is what is happening, with an India-shaped chasm having formed between MAGA’s warring factions. On one side stand those who believe, realistically or not, that the key to restoring American greatness lies in isolationism, tax cuts and deregulation — essentially, reducing America’s external obligations, shrinking the government and unleashing business by hiring the best talent available from around the world.

For those on the other side, however, MAGA has always been first and foremost a reaction to cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism and pluralism in America. In their view, American greatness is synonymous with American whiteness.

India has become Exhibit A for both sides. By many measures, Indians are a model minority: 72 per cent of the Indian immigrants in the United States are university graduates and Indians are among the highest-earning immigrant groups. Indians (including Indian-Americans) have led about 25 per cent of the Silicon Valley startups in the last quarter-century as well as some of America’s tech behemoths, including Alphabet (Google), Microsoft, Adobe and IBM. This helps to explain why the economy-first MAGA faction was perfectly happy to see Trump nominate several Indian-Americans for key positions in his administration, including Jay Bhattacharya (to direct the National Institutes of Health) and Kashyap “Kash” Patel (to head the FBI). Trump also selected Vivek Ramaswamy to co-lead, with Elon Musk, the

Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), an advisory commission focused on slashing the federal budget. The MAGA movement’s white-nationalist faction, however, was seething at the appointments. Trump’s nomination of Sriram Krishnan, a Chennai-born venture capitalist, to serve as a senior policy adviser on artificial intelligence pushed them over the edge. As one user wrote on X, “Did any of yall [sic] vote for this Indian to run America?”

The problem for MAGA’s white-nationalist hardliners extends beyond “this Indian.” On November 14, Musk — who had hired Krishnan in 2022 to run Twitter (now X) shortly after acquiring it — put out a call on X for suggestions for DOGE. Krishnan replied, “Anything to remove country caps for green cards/unlock skilled immigration would be huge.” When Trump announced Krishnan’s nomination the following month, the backlash was immediate. One prominent MAGA activist, Laura Loomer, took to X to declare the announcement “deeply disturbing.” In a passionate, if ungrammatical, rant, she asked: How can the US possibly “control immigration” and “promote America First innovation” under a “guy who wants to REMOVE all restrictions on green card caps”? This would, she claimed, enable foreign students to go to the US and “take jobs that should be given” to Americans. But Krishnan mentions removing only country caps, which limit the number of green cards (US permanent residency visas) that can be issued to individuals from a particular country each year. Country caps disproportionately affect individuals from large countries, particularly those, like India, with large numbers of highly skilled workers. As David Sacks,

Trump’s nominee for White House AI and crypto czar, pointed out, every country currently is “allocated the same number of green cards, no matter how many qualified applicants it has.” As a result, applicants from India have an 11-year wait “whereas applicants from many other countries have no wait at all.” In fact, while Indians account for an overwhelming majority of those holding H1-B visas



for high-skilled workers, they are eligible for just 7 per cent of the green cards issued (the ceiling for any single country). Sacks, Musk and others on the economy-first side of the MAGA civil war want to use legal immigration channels to attract the world’s best and brightest in service of American “greatness.” But for Loomer and her cohort, all immigration is fundamentally problematic as it threatens America’s essentially Christian, European national character and enables foreigners to “take

jobs” from Americans. Immigration from India — where just 2-3 per cent of the population is Christian, and pretty much nobody is white — is no exception. As far-right commentator Ann Coulter told Ramaswamy, a former Republican presidential candidate, earlier this year, she never would have voted for him despite agreeing with many of his views because he is Indian. The recent experiences of two Congressional Democrats of Indian descent, Ro Khanna and Shri Thanedar, were no better. Khanna pointed out that Americans should be celebrating the fact that talented people from around the world, like Krishnan, want to come to the US, rather than going to China. Among the replies he received were statements like, “If they are so great, why didn’t they fix their country of origin?!” and, “We want white immigrants not invasive brown hordes.”

Likewise, Thanedar’s condemnation of the “deplorable rhetoric” targeting Indian-Americans in the H-1B debate triggered a barrage of racist abuse. One X user wrote, “Can I buy you a ticket to Mumbai? One way, of course.” Another declared, “Wow, you are a foreigner shilling for more of your compatriots to flood into my country and compete against my people?” To be sure, racism is not the only reason some Trump supporters oppose immigration. As the responses to Khanna and Thanedar also highlight, many Americans fear increased competition for jobs, especially at a time when AI is threatening to displace workers in a fast-growing range of industries.

We will turn Air India into top-class airline: Tata Sons chief

NEW DELHI. Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran on Saturday said the company is fully committed to transforming Air India into a top-class airline. He said the airline will deliver exceptional service and performance on a global scale. Tata Group acquired Air India in 2022 after the government had signed a share purchase agreement with the group for the sale of Air India for Rs 18,000 crore. Chandrasekaran was responding to a query during a free side chat with TVS Supply Chain Solutions Managing Director Ravi Viswanathan at the Global Alumni Meet of NIT Trichy, Tamil Nadu, on what people can expect from Air India following the acquisition made by Tata Group in 2022. On a lighter note, he appealed to the audience gathered at the venue to urge the aircraft manufacturers Boeing and Airbus to deliver the aircraft as per the orders made by Air India.

OfBusiness plans to invest Rs 3000 cr in next 3 yrs to ramp up steel biz

NEW DELHI. OfBusiness, a b2b commerce and fintech startup, is looking to invest about Rs 3,000 crore into doubling its steel business to more than 4MTPA in the next three years. The company has acquired three steel firms -- SMW Ispat, Shree Sidhbal Ispat and Noble Steel -- in the past and the expansion is lined up in all the three companies. "We are looking forward to investing close to \$350 million, about Rs 3,000 crore, to scale up our steel business from the current 2 million tonne to more than 4 million tonne in the next 3 years. This is also expected to sharply increase the sector EBITDA to 2.5x from the current level. The funding will be a combination of internal accruals and debt & equity financing," Co-Founder and CEO Asish Mohapatra said.

The company supplies steel to companies such as L&T, Adani, J Kumar, Dilip Buildcon, Ashoka Buildcon. OfBusiness also plans to get into new categories such as pre-painted galvanised iron (PPGI) adding onto thermo-mechanically treated (TMT) bars and structures. The company is also planning a \$1 billion IPO in FY26.

"We have been continuously thriving for expansion of our business and be part of India's tremendous growth journey of \$10 trillion economy. To support our expansion plans we are looking forward to our \$1 billion IPO in FY2026," Mohapatra said.

OfBusiness has been into the business of steel, non-ferrous metals, bitumen, food products, as well as finished goods such as apparel and footwear, supplying them to its domestic and international clients.

Meet Kevan Parekh: Indian-Origin Executive Named Apple’s New CFO With Salary Of Rs...

New Delhi. Indian-origin executive Kevan Parekh has made headlines as he takes over as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Apple Inc., effective January 1, 2025. Parekh steps into the role previously held by Luca Maestri, who served for nearly 11 years. Stepping into his new role as Apple's CFO, he will earn an annual salary of \$1 million (Rs 8.57 crore), marking another milestone in his remarkable career.

An Impressive Journey at Apple
Kevan Parekh joined Apple in June 2013 and has since played a vital role in the company's success. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Michigan and an MBA from the University of Chicago. Over the



years, Parekh has taken on several key responsibilities at Apple, including financial planning, investor relations, and market research. Broad Expertise and Key Mentorship
Kevan Parekh's expertise goes beyond finance, with experience in sales, retail and marketing. He worked closely with product marketing and engineering teams. Bloomberg reports that outgoing CFO Luca Maestri has been mentoring Parekh for this role which makes him a natural choice as his successor. While Parekh may not be a household name, he is highly valued within Apple and regularly briefs CEO Tim Cook on critical financial matters.

Career Before Apple
Kevan Parekh, before becoming Apple's CFO played a crucial role in shaping the company's strategies and operations across multiple departments. His career includes senior leadership roles at Thomson Reuters and General Motors before joining Apple. CEO Tim Cook has praised Parekh's sharp intellect, sound judgment, and deep understanding of Apple.

Data protection rules: India Inc says challenges remain

While the industry has broadly welcomed the draft, experts suggest that there is still substantial work to be done to address implementation hurdles, procedural gaps, and areas of ambiguity in the Act.

NEW DELHI. The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (Ind-Aus ECTA), which completed two years on Sunday, has helped India increase its exports by 14% to the Indo-Pacific nation in FY24. However, it is still lower than exports in 2021-22. A press statement by the Ministry of Commerce says since the signing of ECTA, bilateral merchandise trade has more than doubled, surging from \$12.2 billion in 2020-21 to \$26 billion in 2022-23. Total trade, however, moderated in the year 2023-24 to \$24



billion in 2023-24, with India's exports to Australia growing by 14%. "The current fiscal year continues to reflect strong momentum. Total merchandise bilateral trade from April-November 2024 reached \$16.3 billion," says the statement. However, after signing of the agreement, India's trade deficit with Australia had

increased from \$8.5 billion in 2021-22 to \$12 billion in 2022-23. It fell to \$8.2 billion in 2023-24. After the signing of the trade pact, exports of textiles, chemicals, and agriculture goods have shown substantial growth. It has also boosted exports on new lines of products such as gold studded with diamonds and turbojets, highlighting the diversification enabled by the agreement. When it comes to imports, India has mostly imported from Australia essential raw materials, such as metalliferous ores, cotton, wood and wood products. According to the commerce ministry, imports from Australia have fuelled India's industries, contributing to the win-win nature of this partnership. Imports of electronics and engineering have room for growth. Both the countries are committed to building on the momentum created by the ECTA, and to achieve the target of trade to reach AUD 100 billion by 2030 between India and Australia.

River targets retail expansion in India with 25 new stores by March 2025

NEW DELHI. Electric scooter manufacturer River has announced plans to expand its retail footprint by opening 25 stores across the country by March this year. The Bengaluru-headquartered company inaugurated its first store in Coimbatore, the second such facility in Tamil Nadu after the first outlet in Chennai, which was established in 2024.

River is backed by marquee investors including Japan-headquartered Yamaha Motor, Mitsui and Company Ltd., Dubai-headquartered Al Futtaim Group among others. As part of its expansion, the company plans to open stores in Vellore, Erode, Tiruppur across the State. It would

also set up facilities in Mysuru, Belgaum, Tirupati, Ahmedabad, Pune, Nagpur, and Delhi in the

from the start are from this region. And it is a special market for us," company Co-Founder and CEO

Aravind Mani said. River currently retails its scooter 'Indie' priced at Rs 1,42,999 (ex-showroom). The new store -- Rajdurai E-Mobility -- facility has been set up on a 1,200 sq ft land at Kothari Layout, Trichy Road, Coimbatore. "Our goal is to establish River Indie as a distinctive vehicle in the region, offering both style and convenience together. Our plan going forward is to open 25 River Stores across India by March 2025" he said in a

company statement on Sunday. River currently has nine retail facilities in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Hubli, Visakhapatnam and Kochi.



coming months. "After the success of our flagship store in Chennai, we are excited to open (stores) across Tamil Nadu. Many of our employees who have been with us

Nayara Energy to expand retail network by adding one fuel station per day

NEW DELHI. Nayara Energy, India's largest private fuel retailer, plans to add 400 petrol pumps this year to expand its retail network across various states, the firm said on Sunday. With 6,500+ retail outlets across India, Nayara Energy has been adding new retail outlets to its network and has been growing steadily across various states such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan. In a statement, Nayara said it "is well on track to add 400 retail outlets this year". In line with its plans to aggressively grow in India, Nayara Energy has also revamped its dealer programme to onboard new dealers and give a boost to local entrepreneurship. It is now inviting applications for new dealerships across the country to open petrol pumps. With over 6,500 petrol pumps, it caters to the need for reliable and safe mobility across the length and

breadth of the country. It recently forayed into petrochemicals sector with a 4,50,000-tonnes a year polypropylene plant. "Being one of the youngest petroleum brands in India, Nayara Energy is reinventing the fuel retailing category to ensure consumer delight." Customers are always assured of the right quality and quantity of fuel at Nayara Energy's retail outlets," the statement said. Setting new benchmarks in the category, Nayara Energy's fuel stations offer a variety of products and services designed to meet the needs of customers, including high-quality fuels, lubricants, and convenience offerings. With a strategic presence on National Highways and in urban clusters, Nayara Energy's fuel stations are vital links to marketplaces fuelling the aspirations of the rising India well beyond the metros. Commenting on the strategic expansion, Alessandro

des Dorides, CEO, Nayara Energy, said: "Nayara Energy has steadily grown in India and as new-age India prospers, we believe that bolstering our fuel retail network in upcoming towns is integral to the growth of this thriving economy. Our uniquely designed dealer programme believes in creating more avenues for entrepreneurship and will enable in growing our network, by enabling mobility and enhancing connectivity within the underserved markets." In an endeavour to promote transparency in customer loyalty programmes, Nayara Energy is leveraging technology through chatbots and artificial intelligence tools to enhance the quality of its interactions with consumers. Reaffirming its commitment to be India's trusted energy partner and to further aggressively expand its reach

Delivery partners and the new Kunal Kamra unions

NEW DELHI. It's a surrealistic situation out there. There was a time when workers, even the casual and temporary ones, had their trade unions to speak up on their behalf. Things have changed.

It's a hire-and-fire regime now. So much so one needs a stand-up comic like Kunal Kamra to fill the space vacated by traditional leaders.

What do you make of Kamra's latest salvo against quickcomm delivery companies like Blinkit, Zepto and Swiggy for exploiting their delivery workers -- euphemistically called 'delivery partners' or 'gig workers'? Responding to Blinkit CEO Albinder Dhindsa boasting of the lakhs of condoms delivered over New Year's eve, Kamra responded with tweets demanding Dhindsa first come clean on how much he pays his 'delivery partners'. Pointing to the dark side of quick commerce, he accused the promoters of operating as "landlords without owning land" and, while portraying themselves as innovative entrepreneurs, failing to provide fair wages and working conditions. A few weeks ago, Kunal Kamra stepped in for consumers of electric 2 wheelers (e2ws) manufactured by Ola.

While it should have been consumer forums who should have called out Ola promoter Bhavish Aggarwal for the poor after-sales services, it fell on the shoulders of a comedian to highlight the plight of thousands of e2w buyers who had been left holding a lemon.

Voice of the voiceless
He's no Datta Samant or a George Fernandes, but more power to Kamra as he steps forward as the voice of the voiceless. Social media is full of delivery groups working for the Zeptos and Blinkits singing their appreciation for Kamra taking up their cause.

But what has happened to the institutional forms of collective bargaining? The trade unions and grassroots organizations who traditionally stood up against work place exploitation and for consumer rights? A variety of reasons since the dawn of liberalization in 1991 have contributed to the decline of organized trade unionism. The slow erosion of the public sector and its institutionalised trade unions, together with the rise of a large informal, services sector has led to the current laissez-faire regime. High unemployment too has worked against permanent tenures and encouraged 'casualization' of jobs. The government has also contributed to the chaos. Keen on a business-friendly environment, it has through the Labour Codes (Repeal) Act 2021 repealed a clutch of 8 labour laws including The Maternity Benefit Act, 1972 and The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1961 reducing the legal rights of employees.

How Sebi nailed Ketan Parekh

Scam came to light after Sebi report indicated involvement of KP in front-running stocks

MUMBAI. Ketan Parekh, the infamous stockbroker and key associate of scamster big-bull Hashad Mehta of the 2000-01 stock market scandal, for which he was imprisoned for years, is back to do what he is best at—manipulating the stock market. Even as he was under the Sebi ban for 14 years from entering the market since 2003, KP, as he is known for, has been gaming the system—this time through front-running the stocks that Tiger Global holds in domestic companies, and mostly in PB Fintech.

How Sebi nailed him

Tracking the 10 fake phone numbers, including that of his wife Mamta's that he shared with the front office of Sebi during his recent visits. The latest scam came to light on January 2 when Sebi in a 188-page interim order by whole-time member Kamlesh Varshney, banned KP and 22 others including Singapore-based trader Rohit Salgaocar from market and ordered impounding of Rs 66 crore they illicitly gained from the scam.

KP didn't do any trade this time too but got his Kolkata-based associates to do the job

for him. KP used to instruct the front-runners using different mobile phones registered under different names and was known as 'Jack', 'John', 'Boss', 'Bhai' among other names.

The Sebi report doesn't name Tiger Global, except saying KP and his associates were front-running in stocks held by a large USD-based portfolio investor, named the 'Big Client', BSE and NSE data show the affected fund is Tiger Global.

The Sebi used the screenshots of chats on trading instructions given by KP and his henchmen on November 11, 2022, to sell shares of PB Fintech, parent firm of online financial broker Policybazaar, using a slew of operators to front-run trades.

The Sebi has found Parekh, Salgaocar and others were not only front-running trades on Tiger Global stocks, but were on buying side when Tiger Global sold shares of PB Fintech. Front-running is an illegal practice of placing a personal trade based on non-public information about a large upcoming order that may impact the price movements. As the findings, which match data from the exchanges, on November 11, 2022, two funds of Tiger Global (referred to as the Big Client in the report) sold 52.5 lakh shares of PB Fintech. GRD Securities, Salasar Stock Broking and Anirudh Damani (main three front-

runners) have matched their trades with the Big Client for 20.61 lakh shares. As per the BSE data, two Tiger Global entities—Tiger Global Eight Holdings and Internet Fund III which is a venture capital fund managed by Tiger Global



Management—had together sold 1.23 crore shares of PB Fintech on that day. While Tiger Global Eight Holdings sold 76.13 lakh shares, Internet Fund sold 51.6 lakh shares and on NSE Tiger Global sold over 32.84 lakh shares on November 11, 2022, at a price of Rs 388.34. The order highlighted the chronology of events wherein Salgaocar, with whom Tiger Global used to consult before placing certain orders, passed information to KP who then gave trading instructions in the WhatsApp groups. While the traders of the big client were discussing trades with

Salgaocar to ensure counter-parties for their trading, Salgaocar was using that information to make illegal profits by routing information to KP.

When the information reached KP, he acted in a systematic manner, and trades were executed in different accounts, which generated unlawful profits of Rs 66.77 crore. Before market hours, Salgaocar and trader of the Big Client were discussing about Policy Bazar and trader of the Big Client confirmed to Salgaocar that they would sell Policy Bazar that day... from 9:00 am to 9:58 am, KP gave multiple instructions to sell the scrip at various price in the WhatsApp group 'Jack-Saro'. KP used front-runners

As per Sebi, KP was using 10 mobile numbers to do the act and one of the phone numbers matched the one obtained by KP on his wife's Aadhar card and this was last nail for him even as he was under a Sebi ban since 2003 after the Harshad Mehta scam.

But KP, began his life as chartered accountant in the 1980s and soon launched his own brokerage Grow More, was operating from the shadows, using a network of hawala agents called angadias. But that cover was blown as Sebi followed the trail of his phone numbers, registered on different names.

UAPA tribunal upholds Centre’s five-year ban on Khalistani group SFJ

►The ruling follows the Union government’s declaration in July 2024 that SFJ remains an unlawful association, citing alarming evidence of its escalating anti-national activities.

NEW DELHI. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) Tribunal has upheld the Centre’s decision to impose a five-year extension on the ban against the pro-Khalistan group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ). The ruling follows the Union government’s declaration in July 2024 that SFJ remains an unlawful association, citing alarming evidence of its escalating anti-national activities. Presided over by Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta of the Delhi High Court, the tribunal on Friday confirmed the government’s concerns about SFJ’s deepening ties with Khalistani terror groups like Babbar Khalsa International and Khalistan Tiger Force, as well as its collaboration with Pakistan’s notorious Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to fuel militancy in Punjab. The tribunal’s investigation revealed disturbing patterns of SFJ recruiting and



radicalising youth via social media, financing terrorism through smuggling, and issuing death threats to prominent political figures, including the Prime Minister and Home Minister. Over a five-year period, SFJ’s unlawful activities grew significantly, with the number of FIRs against the group rising

from 11 in 2019 to a staggering 122 by 2024. Additionally, SFJ’s campaign to incite mutiny within the Indian Army and its destructive attempts to disrupt national events, including the G20 Summit, were noted as major security concerns. The tribunal also condemned SFJ’s efforts to target critical infrastructure like power plants and railways, further highlighting the group’s dangerous agenda. The group’s exploitation of cyber platforms to spread separatist propaganda, incite violence, and disrupt public order, using automated calls and videos, was also a key piece of evidence. With the testimony of 52 witnesses, including senior police and intelligence officers, and corroborating documents and videos, the tribunal concluded that SFJ’s activities posed an undeniable threat to India’s national security.

Iskcon temple employee in Indore flees with lakhs of donation money

A manhunt is underway to arrest an Iskcon employee, who escaped from a temple in Indore with lakhs of donation money. The accused was responsible for collecting and depositing the donations.



New Delhi. An employee at the Iskcon temple in Indore has fled with lakhs of donation money, along with a receipt book, officials said on Saturday. The theft was reported late Friday night when the temple’s chief accountant, Vishwa Nam Das, filed an FIR with police. "An FIR was filed by the temple's Chief Finance Officer Vishwa Nam Das late on Friday night," top-ranked police official Arvind Kumar said, as reported by news agency. Murlidhar Das, the employee who went missing, was responsible for collecting and depositing the donations, according to temple spokesperson Ravi Lochan Das. "After further investigation, we'll determine the exact amount deposited by him," he said. Murlidhar Das, son of Nimai Chand Yadav, hails from Madhya Pradesh's Indore, according to the FIR filed at the police station. Along with the money, he took a receipt book containing 32 sheets. A manhunt is underway to arrest the missing Iskcon employee, Murlidhar Das, and get back the stolen funds. This isn't the first time such an incident has been reported from the temple. Earlier, a person named Saurav had fled after stealing money donated by devotees and a receipt book. However, he died before authorities could recover the money.

Delhi wakes up to dense fog, several flights and trains delayed

New Delhi. Delhi flights delayed: The National Capital on Sunday woke up to a thick layer of fog disrupting the flight and train services. The Delhi Airport shared an update regarding flights delayed at IGI Airport and stated flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected. It is advisable to contact the airline for updated timings. Flights delayed Delhi Airport fog Several flights are delayed at Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi, due to fog. "While landings and take-offs continue at Delhi Airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected. Passengers are requested to contact the airline concerned for updated flight information. Any inconvenience caused is deeply regretted," Delhi Airport stated in an advisory posted on X. CAT III facility allows aircraft to operate in low-visibility conditions. Along with the flights, several trains are also running late. The travellers are advised to keep checking the updated time of their flights or trains through accessible platforms beforehand. On Saturday too, the dense fog led to the delay of 81 trains while 19 flights got diverted. The Northern Railway yesterday said a total of 59 trains were running late by up to six hours and 22 by around eight hours. Delhi weather According to the India Meteorological Department, Delhi recorded 10 degrees Celsius at 5.30 am on Sunday. Dense fog enveloped the national capital on Sunday morning, reducing visibility to zero in several areas. Meanwhile, the air quality in the national capital continued in the 'very poor' category.

Student stabbed to death by group outside Delhi school after fight over 'Pithu' game

NEW DELHI. In a tragic turn of events, a fight over a game of 'pithu' (seven stones) between two schoolmates two days ago escalated into violence on Friday when a 14-year-old boy was stabbed to death by a group, which included his classmate, outside a government school in east Delhi's Shakarpur. The police have detained five minors and arrested two men in connection with the case. According to the police, "The victim, a class 9 student, got into a quarrel with his classmate during a game of 'pithu' two days ago. The exchange got heated between the boys and in order to exact revenge, one of the boys reportedly borrowed a mobile phone from another student at 4 pm on Friday during the break period to make a call to someone. Over the call, the boy mentioned the dispute with his classmate (the victim) and instructed the other person to 'send people' to resolve the matter. This conversation set the stage for the larger confrontation outside the school gate," police said. Police said, when students were exiting the campus after the school hours, the boy with whom the victim argued was seen waiting outside the main gate with a group of individuals. Acting on the boy's instigation, one of the accused stabbed the victim in his thigh. The assailants fled the scene, leaving him critically injured. The victim was given first aid by the school staff and transported to Hedgewar Hospital, where he was referred to GTB Hospital due to his critical condition. The teen was declared dead at the hospital, police said.

Delhi: Bangladeshi national residing illegally for 3 years arrested, deported

NEW DELHI. During the recent verification drive, Delhi Police arrested a Bangladeshi national, Md Sahidul Islam, who had been living illegally in the south west district of Delhi for three years. Officials from the Palam Village Police Station detained the individual, who was later handed over to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for deportation to Bangladesh. According to police reports, the accused admitted to being an undocumented migrant and was unable to provide valid identification. Authorities also discovered photocopied documents from Bangladesh in his possession. The drive, initiated on the instructions of Delhi lieutenant governor VK Saxena, aimed to identify Bangladeshi nationals living unlawfully in the city, said Madhup Tiwari, Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order). Earlier in the week, two other Bangladeshi nationals, identified as Liyacet (54) and his wife Nasreen (39), were detained during a similar operation by the Safdarjung Enclave Police Station. Both had been residing illegally in Delhi since 2012 and were deported through the FRRO. In separate drives, the south west district Police arrested two more Bangladeshi nationals.

AAP's 'no Chief Minister face' jab at BJP, party responds with 'aapda' dig

New Delhi. The ruling AAP and opposition BJP were involved in a fresh tussle on social media ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls slated to be held next month. The AAP took a dig at the BJP for not declaring a chief ministerial face, and posted a video humorously showing the absence of a groom ('dulha') on a horse. Not backing out, the BJP responded with an 'aapda' (disaster) jibe at the Arvind Kejriwal-led party and said it would come to power in the national capital. The saffron party has been out of power since 1998. While announcing his resignation in September last year, Kejriwal said he would return as the Chief Minister only when the people of Delhi gave him a "certificate of honesty" in the upcoming elections. Kejriwal resigned after he got bail in the excise policy case and was in jail for six months.



AAP leader Atishi then succeeded him for the top post. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched a blistering attack on Kejriwal, alleging that the AAP government was steeped in corruption and had turned into an 'aapda' for Delhi. "They have committed a liquor scam, school scam, and pollution scam. They are openly engaging in corruption and even publicising it. It is a disaster ('aapda')

for Delhi, and the residents have declared war against this disaster ('aapda')." PM Modi said at a rally in north-west Delhi's Ashok Vihar. Kejriwal then hit back at PM Modi, asserting that the real disaster lay within the BJP itself. "The disaster isn't in Delhi. It's within the BJP. The first disaster is that the BJP doesn't have a chief ministerial face. The second is that the BJP has no narrative. The third is that the BJP has no agenda for the Delhi elections," he said. he Election Commission has not yet announced the dates for the Delhi Assembly polls. The current tenure of the 70-member Delhi Assembly will end on February 23. In the 2015 and 2020 polls, AAP secured a massive majority, winning 67 and 62 seats, respectively. The BJP was reduced to single digits, managing three and eight in the last two elections.

Delivery boy apprehended for stabbing another teenager to death after argument in Delhi

New Delhi. A 17-year-old boy has been apprehended for allegedly stabbing another minor to death after an argument in North Delhi's Timarpur area. Sudhanshu Verma, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police-I (North Delhi), said a PCR call was received at 10.19 pm on December 29, 2024, reporting a man lying injured on the footpath at Lancer Road near Mayor House in Timarpur. "Upon arrival, the police found a male with a stab wound to his left chest and blood stains around the scene. The deceased was later identified as a 16-year-old domestic help from Bihar's Madhubani district who had been working in the area for the past one week," he said. The boy's



body was shifted to Aruna Asaf Ali Government Hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. A murder case was registered on December 30, 2024, under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita section 103(1) at Timarpur police station. Through the analysis of local intelligence and footage from 25 CCTV cameras around the crime

scene, the police identified the minor suspect and traced his movements before apprehending him on December 31 from Timarpur. "During interrogation, he confessed that an argument had escalated into a violent altercation with the victim, leading him to stab the victim," said Additional DCP Verma, adding that the accused worked as a delivery boy and had known the victim for about two weeks. "The victim allegedly harassed him by taking his delivery items." The police said they recovered from the minor's home the murder weapon—a blood-stained knife—as well as clothes worn by him during the crime. Further investigations are underway in the case.

Delhi HC clears doctor accused of foetal gender disclosure, cites lack of proof

NEW DELHI. The High Court has dismissed charges against a doctor accused of illegally revealing a foetus's gender, ruling that there was insufficient evidence to support the claims. The case, which involved alleged violations of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC and PNDT) Act, hinged on a sting operation conducted in August 2020 at a Hari Nagar ultrasound center. Justice Chandra Dhari Singh observed, "There is no material on record to establish that the procedure carried out by the petitioner (doctor) violated the law." The court further noted that the alleged gender disclosure was reportedly made by a laboratory employee, not the doctor herself. The FIR had accused the doctor of facilitating the disclosure. Justice Singh also criticised the delay in the investigation, emphasising the need to prevent further harassment. "The inordinate delay in filing the charge sheet reinforces the view that the FIR is liable to be quashed," the judgment stated.

India becomes world’s third-largest Metro network, achieves milestone of 1000 kms

New Delhi. India now has the world’s 3rd largest Metro network! The metro rail network in India has increased to 1000 km. With such a large network, India has become the country with the third largest metro rail network in the world after China and America. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the extension of Delhi Metro's Magenta Line on Sunday. He will also inaugurate the 13 km long section of Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namo Bharat Corridor built between Sahibabad in UP and New Ashok Nagar in Delhi. Metro network's growth in last 10 years In the last 10 years, the number of states with metro services has grown to 11 from five, while the number of cities benefiting from metro connectivity has surged from five to 23. Daily passenger commute has also witnessed exponential growth, rising

from 28 lakh in 2014 to over one crore now, reflecting a 2.5 times increase. Furthermore, the total distance travelled by metro trains has tripled, climbing from 86,000 kilometres to an impressive 2.75



lakh kilometres. PM Modi shared the milestone on X. "Over the last decade, extensive work has been done in boosting metro connectivity, thus strengthening

urban transport and enhancing 'Ease of Living', his post reads. PM Modi to inaugurate Namo Bharat corridor today Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the additional 13 kilometre Delhi section of Namo Bharat corridor between Sahibabad and New Ashok Nagar on Sunday, officials said. The inauguration will take place around 11 am and PM Modi will likely to travel from Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar. The passenger operations will commence from 5 pm onwards on Sunday and trains will be available to the public at a frequency of 15 minutes. The fare from New Ashok Nagar station to Meerut South is Rs 150 for standard coach and Rs 225 for premium coach. Of the newly inaugurated 13 km

section, six km is underground and includes a prominent station on the corridor, Anand Vihar. This marks the first time that Namo Bharat trains will operate in an underground section, the officials stated. Namo Bharat trains served 50 lakh commuters To date, Namo Bharat trains have served over 50 lakh commuters. Further construction in other sections -- New Ashok Nagar-Sarai Kale Khan and Meerut South-Modipuram -- is progressing at a rapid pace, they said. Anand Vihar underground station is one of the largest stations on the Namo Bharat corridor. Commuters will be able to travel from here to Meerut South in just 35 minutes. As a special arrangement for the movement of vehicles and pedestrians at this station, three bridges have been built over the Ghazipur drain. Two of these bridges are to be used for vehicle entry and exit, while one is exclusively for pedestrians.

NEWS BOX

Edward Pettifer: Man With Royal Family Link Killed In New Orleans Attack

World A 42-year-old US Army veteran rammed a pickup truck into a crowd of people celebrating the New Year on January 1, killing 14 people. The accused, Shamsud-Din Jabbar, who had pledged allegiance to Islamic State (ISIS), was killed in a shootout with police shortly after the attack. Among the victims, was Edward Pettifer, a 31-year-old from Chelsea who shared strong ties with the Royal Family. "The entire family are devastated at the tragic news of Ed's death in New Orleans. He was a wonderful son, brother, grandson, nephew, and a friend to so many. We will all miss him terribly," the Pettifer family said in a statement.

What was Edward Pettifer?

Edward Pettifer was the stepson of Prince William and Prince Harry's former nanny Tiggy Pettifer.

In 1993, King Charles employed Tiggy Legge-Bourke, now Pettifer, whose family had longstanding links to the royals.Edward's half-brother Tom is one of William's godsons and was a page boy at his wedding to Catherine, the Princess of Wales, in 2011.

King Charles expressed grief over Edward's death on Saturday. It was "understood the King was deeply saddened, and had been in touch with the family to share personal condolences", local media reported.

Prince William and Princess Catherine said they were "shocked and saddened" by the tragic death of Edward. "Our thoughts and prayers remain with the Pettifer family and all those innocent people who have been tragically impacted by this horrific attack," a post on the couple's Kensington Palace social media account read.

New Orleans attack

14 people died and over 30 were injured after Jabbar, a former US Army veteran, drove his pickup truck into a crowd on Bourbon Street in New Orleans on Wednesday. The Pentagon said Jabbar had served in the army as a human resource specialist and an IT specialist from 2007 to 2015, and then in the Army Reserve until 2020.

US Olympic Medallist Fred Kerley Tased, Arrested After Clash With Cops In Miami



Miami.American Olympic medallist and former world champion sprinter Fred Kerley was tased and then arrested in Miami Beach following a clash on Thursday, the police department said.Kerley, bronze medallist in the 100m at the Paris Olympics last year and silver medalist in Tokyo, was involved in a scuffle with police and was tased by them after trying to force his way into an active investigation scene.

The 29-year-old had approached the scene in South Beach to ask about his car which was parked nearby the scene and police said he showed an "aggressive demeanor" and ignored orders to back away before a scuffle involving several officers.A police arrest affidavit said four officers had tried to restrain Kerley and said they had hit him in the head, rib cage and back before using the taser.The statement said that after being incapacitated by the taser he "continued to resist officers"Kerley, 100m world champion in 2022, was charged with resisting arrest without violence, battery against an officer and disorderly conduct.

Police said Kerley was transported to Mount Sinai Medical Center for evaluation and was booked at Turner Guilford Knight Correctional Center.

South Florida television station Local 10 WPLG, reported that Kerley appeared in court on Friday afternoon.His attorney, who was not named, criticized the police's behavior and said there had been a "total misunderstanding" and that Kerley was a "model citizen in our community. This is nothing more than an overreaction by the police."The station said that Miami-Dade judge Mindy Glazer said the incident "could have been handled another way".I have a gentleman who's never been arrested, there's no prior arrests, who his attorney's saying has competed in the Olympics, who is obviously a professional athlete and it's unfortunate that he got to this position," she said.

Gaza: Hamas Accuses Israel Of 'Horrific Crimes' After 94 Airstrikes Kill 184 In 3 Days

World The Hamas-run Gaza media office said that the Israeli army carried out 94 airstrikes and shelling on the Gaza Strip over the past 72 hours, killing 184 people. In its statement, the office on Saturday described the escalation as "dangerous and brutal," targeting unarmed civilians and residential areas, particularly in Gaza City. It added that many of the victims, either killed or injured, remained trapped under rubble, with damaged infrastructure obstructing their recovery and access to hospitals, Xinhua news agency reported.

Palestinian Civil Defence officials in Gaza confirmed that Israeli airstrikes had intensified violently over the past three days, which local residents have described as an extraordinarily difficult period. The statement held the Israeli army fully responsible for these "horrific crimes" and also criticised the US administration for providing Israel with weapons and political support.It called on the international community and the UN Security Council to uphold their legal and moral obligations by dispatching independent investigative teams to document these "heinous crimes" and ensure accountability for the perpetrators.

Trump's second term foreign policy to focus on China challenge and strengthening ties with India, says Lisa Curtis

WASHINGTON. A major focus of President-elect Donald Trump's foreign policy will likely be on the China challenge, and it will likely involve building stronger strategic ties with India, an influential American expert has said. She added that the Quad will also likely remain an important forum for engagement for the incoming administration.Trump, 78, will be sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, making him the second president in American history after Grover Cleveland in 1892 to be elected to a non-consecutive second term. Trump previously served as the 45th President of the United States from 2017 to 2021.

"A major focus of the Trump II foreign policy will likely be on the China challenge, whether in the form of economic and military competition, the technology race, or countering China's strategy to dominate the Indo-Pacific," Lisa Curtis, who was deputy assistant to the president and senior director for South and Central Asia at the National Security Council (NSC) from 2017 to 2021, told PTI in an interview.

"We can expect the incoming Trump team to

continue multiple lines of effort aimed at competing effectively with China. This will likely include investments in U.S. defense capabilities that enhance deterrence in the Indo-Pacific, as well as a greater focus on positioning U.S. defense assets in the region," she said.

Curtis further noted that Trump is likely to continue and may even strengthen the Biden-era restrictions on U.S. high technology to China through export controls but may also focus more on reaching bilateral trade deals that protect U.S. consumers.Trump's advisors, such as incoming National Security Advisor Michael Waltz and Secretary of State-designate Marco Rubio, will likely focus on strategic competition with China and working with allies and partners to circumscribe China's growing power and influence in the region, as well as to counter Chinese aggression and bullying of other Indo-Pacific nations, Curtis said.

"Trump's economic team, on the other hand, will likely want to maintain a steady economic relationship with Beijing, accounting for the interests of U.S. businesses that have major investments in



China. The way these differing areas of focus on U.S.-China relations play out inside the Trump administration could mirror the situation we saw in the first Trump term, when Trump reached a trade deal with China in January 2020, only to see U.S.-China relations plummet a few months later during the outbreak of COVID-19," she said.According to Curtis, a major aspect of the second Trump administration's strategy toward the Indo-Pacific will likely involve building stronger strateic ties with India.

"While friction over trade issues will certainly be a factor in relations, these differences are unlikely to define the overall strategic partnership or get in the

way of their joint goal to check China's influence," she said.

"For example, even though the Trump administration revoked India's GSP privileges in 2019, we saw tremendous goodwill between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi, as evidenced during the 'Howdy, Modi' event in Houston in late 2019 and the 'Namaste, Trump' event in Ahmedabad in February 2020. The first Trump administration also pulled out all stops to support India during its border crisis with China in the spring and summer of 2020, which contributed to the overall elevation of the U.S.-India relationship by the time Trump left office in January 2021," said the former White House official.

Curtis, who is currently a senior fellow and director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program at the Center for a New American Security think tank, said the Quad will also likely remain an important forum for engagement."The Quad was originally revived under Trump I and has since become an effective multilateral mechanism to support concepts like sovereignty and independence of nations, free and open seaways.

Powerful Winter Storm To Hit Half Of US With Snow, Ice And Strong Winds

Washington.A powerful winter storm began hammering the central United States on Saturday, with meteorologists warning that millions in the east of the country would face blizzard conditions, treacherous ice, frigid temperatures and severe travel disruptions.More than 60 million people are in the path of the dangerous storm, which is set to plunge the eastern half of the United States into a deep freeze of Arctic air through Monday.The National Weather Service (NWS) warned of ferocious weather and severe travel delays, with ice, snow and gale-force winds in states from the central plains to the Mid-Atlantic.Winter storm warnings have been issued from western Kansas clear across to the coastal states of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia, an unusually broad 1,500-mile (2,400-kilometer) swath under immediate threat.

"Disruptive winter storm to impact the Central Plains to the Mid-Atlantic through Monday with widespread heavy snow and damaging ice accumulations," the NWS said in its latest report.The agency warned that areas from northeastern Kansas to north-central Missouri would see "the heaviest snowfall in a decade."

Scientists say extreme weather is becoming more common and more severe as a result of manmade climate

change.- Travel disruptions -

The first major storm of 2025 was already wreaking havoc on travel, with Kansas City International Airport announcing closure of its flight operations Saturday "due to rapid ice accumulation."Parts of the eastern states of New York and Pennsylvania are facing "heavy lake-effect snow" coming off the Great Lakes that could dump as much as two feet (61 centimeters) there, according to the NWS.Forecast company AccuWeather said Saturday that the lake-effect snow total in the region, already blanketed in snow this week, could top four feet.

A blizzard will rage across the Central Plains by early Sunday, and "whiteout conditions will make travel extremely hazardous, with impassable roads and a high risk of motorists becoming stranded," the NWS said.

The US capital Washington could be blanketed in five inches or more of snow, with up to 10 inches possible in nearby areas.

With the jet stream diving southward, temperatures are expected to plunge, in some places to below zero degrees Fahrenheit (-18 Celsius), while strong wind gusts will compound the dangers.

The mercury could sink tens of degrees below seasonal norms down to the US Gulf Coast. Before then, severe

thunderstorms are expected across the lower Mississippi Valley, the NWS forecast.Another major concern is freezing rain and sleet expected from Kansas eastward to Kentucky and Virginia, setting the stage for thick ice to coat roads, making travel hazardous, bringing down trees and electricity lines, and potentially leaving millions of customers without power during a cold snap.The NWS warned that it expected widespread tree damage and "long-lasting power outages" from Kansas to the central Appalachian Mountains.Conditions could prove especially perilous in the Appalachians, where a deadly hurricane in late September devastated communities and ravaged multiple southeastern states including Kentucky.Many of those communities are still recovering from the effects of that hurricane.

The new storm "will likely cause significant disruption and dangerous conditions on our roads and could cause significant power outages just 24 hours or so before it's going to get really cold in Kentucky," Governor Andy Beshear told an emergency meeting.

The governors of Missouri and Virginia have declared a state of emergency in their states, and they took to social media to warn residents to expect hazardous weather this weekend.

Austria's chancellor says will step down in 'coming days'

VIENNA. Austria's conservative chancellor Karl Nehammer said Saturday he would step down in the 'coming days' after breaking off coalition talks with the Social Democrats over disagreements on key issues.Nehammer made the announcements in a video message and accompanying statement posted on the X platform."After the break-off of the coalition talks I am going to do the following: I will step down both as chancellor and party chairman of the People's Party in the coming days and enable an orderly transition," he said.The surprise move comes just one day after Austria's liberal party withdrew from three-party coalition talks to form a centrist government. The aim had been to



sideline the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖe), which won the September 29 national elections.The FPÖe won 28.8 per cent of the vote but has been unable to find partners to form a national government.The conservative People's Party (ÖVP) came second with 26.3 per cent, while the centre-left Social Democrats (SPOe) won 21.1 per

cent.That led Nehammer to pursue talks with the SPOe and the liberal party NEOS to form a government to shut out the far right, but those three-way talks collapsed on Friday.The remaining two centrist parties had vowed to continue their work.But a day later, on Saturday, Nehammer announced on X that "agreement with the SPOe is not possible on key issues."We are therefore ending negotiations with the SPOe," Nehammer added.

On Friday, President Alexander Van der Bellen had called on the two parties to form a government "without delay".

A three-party governing coalition would have been a first since 1949 in Austria, which faces a flagging economy as and a ballooning budget deficit.

Biden Honors Hillary Clinton, George Soros, Lionel Messi with Presidential Medal of Freedom

WASHINGTON. Outgoing President Joe Biden has presented the U.S.'s highest civilian award to 19 people, including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, football superstar Lionel Messi, controversial philanthropist George Soros, and actor Denzel Washington, for their contributions to America and the world.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is awarded to individuals who have made exemplary contributions to the prosperity, values, or security of the United States, world peace, or other significant societal, public, or private endeavors.Due to a scheduling conflict, Argentine football star Messi could not be present in person at the White House to receive the award from the U.S. President."For the final time as President, I have the honor of bestowing the Medal of Freedom, our nation's highest civilian honor, on a group of extraordinary, truly extraordinary people who gave their sacred effort, their sacred effort, to shape the culture and the cause of America," Biden said at a glittering function in the East Room of the White House.Former President Bill Clinton, several of his Cabinet members, including Defense

Secretary Lloyd Austin, along with numerous celebrities, were present in the East Room during the awards ceremony on Saturday afternoon."This group of people leaves an incredible mark on our country with insight and influence that can be felt around the globe in major cities and remote areas of life, finding us closer as people and showing us that what's possible as a nation is nothing beyond our capacity," Biden said.

"As cultural icons, humanitarians, rock stars, sports stars, you feed the hungry, you give hope to those who are hurting, and you craft the signs and sounds of our movements and our memories. It's amazing.""You inspire, and you bring healing and joy to so many lives that otherwise wouldn't be touched," the President continued. "You answer the call to serve and lead others to do the same. You defend the values of America, even when they're under attack, which they have been," Biden added, before presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom.Fannie Lou Hamer, who transformed the struggle for racial justice in America, Ashton Carter, who served as the 25th Secretary of



Defense, Robert Francis Kennedy, remembered as an Attorney General who fiercely combated racial segregation, and George W. Romney, a businessman who served as the chairman and president of American Motors Corporation, were awarded posthumously. Their medals were received by their family members.

Hillary Clinton was the only recipient to receive a standing ovation.

"As a lawyer, she defended the rights of children. As First Lady, she fought for universal healthcare and declared women's rights are human rights," a military aide read the citation as she was presented with the medal by the president. "As Senator,

she helped New York rebuild after September 11, 2001. As Secretary of State, she championed democracy worldwide. Her nomination for president broke barriers and inspired generations. Through it all, her career has been dedicated to an eternal truth: America's ideals are sacred, and we must always defend and live by them," the citation said.Alex Soros accepted the award on behalf of his father, George Soros, an investor, philanthropist, and founder of the Open Society Foundations.

"Born into a Jewish family in Hungary, George Soros escaped Nazi occupation to build a life of freedom for himself and countless others around the world," said the citation, as read by the military aide. "Educated in England, he settled in America and became an investor and philanthropist, supporting key pillars of open societies, rights and justice, equity and equality, freedom now and in the future," it continued."As an immigrant who found freedom and prosperity in America, I am deeply moved by this honor," George Soros said in a statement.

Pakistan: Six dead, 25 injured after BLA militants bomb bus in Balochistan

At least six people, including paramilitary troops, were killed, and more than 25 others injured in a bombing on Saturday in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

The attack targeted a bus carrying paramilitary troops of the Frontier Corps (FC) as it traveled from Karachi to Turbat, about seven kilometers west of the city.

"At least six people, including FC soldiers and civilians, were killed in a bomb attack on a bus," Rashid-ur-Rehman, a senior local police official, was quoted as saying by news agency AFP.The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the bombing. Jeeyand Baloch, the group's spokesperson, said the attack targeted a convoy of Pakistani army personnel."Exact details of the blast are being investigated but a police official said high-ranking



police officer SSP Zohaib Mohsin was in the bus along with his family and could have been the target," A senior police official was quoted as saying by news agency PTI. The senior police official and his family were part of a wedding party on the bus.

The BLA often claims responsibility for attacks on security forces and non-local Pakistanis, particularly those from Punjab, in Balochistan province.Pakistan has experienced an increase in attacks in recent months, especially in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The military reported that in 2024 alone, 383 soldiers and 925 militants have been killed in various clashes.Balochistan, which borders Afghanistan and Iran, has faced decades of sectarian, ethnic, and separatist violence. Militants in the region have also targeted foreign-funded energy projects, accusing external groups of exploiting the area's natural resources while neglecting local residents.

In November, separatists claimed responsibility for a bombing at Quetta's railway station that killed at least 26 people, including 14 soldiers. In August, the BLA carried out coordinated attacks involving dozens of assailants, killing at least 39 people, one of the highest tolls in recent years.

Meanwhile, with the next round of the Ranji Trophy 2024-25 beginning from January 23, it remains to be seen whether the senior players will return to play domestic cricket as the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is also on the horizon. India don't play any more Test cricket till their tour to England in July. Hence, the senior players will have to find a way to regain their form if they are to elongate their Test career.

New Zealand reached the target with 23.4 overs to spare, underscoring their dominance with both bat and ball.

How Samantha Ruth Prabhu Is Setting The Tone For 2025

Like many around the world, actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu has also made some resolutions for 2025. In a new picture shared on her Instagram Stories, the actress is seen basking in the sun on a cold, winter day on a street sparsely covered with people. With her back facing the camera, Samantha is wearing a long coat paired with a beanie. She shared the picture with the song It's Hard to Be Humble by Mac Davis as the background score. She turned on the lyrics of the song, which is particularly garnering much attention. It says, "To know me is to love me. I must be a hell of a man. Oh Lord, It's hard to be humble, But I'm doing the best that I can." Atop the picture, Samantha wrote, "Mood for 2025!! Let's go."

Earlier, the South star gave her fans a glimpse of how she began 2025. Samantha, like many, rang in the New Year by seeking blessings at a religious place. In a picture that the actress posted, she was seen inside a church. Dressed in the same grey-coloured long coat, Samantha stood at the end of a well-lit and decorated church, with her back towards the camera. In the photo, she was seen lighting candles near a stand before praying. While the exact location of the church is not known, it was not occupied by anyone else but the actress. Atop the photo, she wrote, "Day 1, 2025," followed by a red heart emoji.



While Samantha is on a trip at the beginning of 2025, the Citadel: Honey Bunny actress spent the last few days of 2024 being a couch potato. On December 27, she shared a series of pictures on her Instagram account, giving her fans a glimpse into her low-key Christmas celebration. She also added some snaps of various religious places and beautiful scenery. In the caption, she wrote, "Maybe it's fine to just sit and stare. Maybe the hustle can wait for a while. Maybe all you need in a busy world is the quiet of a simple life. Maybe having no plan is part of the plan...To wander, to wonder, just because you can. Happy Holidays." Speaking of her professional front, the actress was seen in Prime Video's Citadel: Honey Bunny, co-starring Varun Dhawan, Kay Kay Menon, Saqib Saleem and others. Currently, the 37-year-old South Indian has Raj & DK's Rakt Bramhand – The Bloody Kingdom, a fantasy action series, in the pipeline.



Priyanka Chopra Sizzles In A Red Bikini, Poses With Nick Jonas And Malti As They Welcome 2025

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas shared her goal for 2025, which is to focus on "abundance" in joy, happiness, and peace. She posted a series of pictures on Instagram with her family, including husband Nick Jonas and daughter Malti Marie. In the first image, Priyanka showed off her toned figure in an orange bikini while standing on the parapet of their luxury villa.

Another picture featured her in a red bikini, posing with Nick on the beach while Malti played in the water. Several other images captured happy moments spent with her family, including one where Priyanka sat on a jet ski and others with her daughter Malti. Check out the photos here: She wrote as the caption: "Abundance. That is my goal for 2025. In joy, in happiness and in peace. May we all find abundance this new year. So grateful for my family. Happy 2025. Thank you @airbnb for such wonderful memories."

On New Year's Eve, Priyanka shared her approach to dealing with people who "give off bad vibes." She reposted a video from empirewellbabe about handling individuals with negative energy. In the clip, a girl is

shown using a spray, with the text reading, "Me to the people who give off bad energy/vibes."

Priyanka Chopra has several exciting projects lined up. She will star alongside Idris Elba and John Cena in Heads of State, an action-comedy directed by Ilya Naishuller. Priyanka will also play a 19th-century



Caribbean pirate in The Bluff, a swashbuckling drama set in the Caribbean. The film, directed by Frank E. Flowers, also stars Karl Urban, Ismael Cruz Cordova, Safia Oakley-Green, and Vedanten Naidoo. Priyanka's character, a former pirate, must protect her family when her past catches up with her. Additionally, she will return for the second season of Citadel.

Govinda's Wife Sunita Addresses His Bullet Injury: 'I Would've Shot Him In The Chest, Not Leg'



Last year, Govinda accidentally shot himself in the leg while he was cleaning his gun. The actor was rushed to the hospital and kept there for a few days. Later, Shilpa Shetty had jokingly asked the actor if Sunita had shot him. Govinda's wife, Sunita Ahuja, opened up about the injury. Speaking to Hindi Rush, Sunita joked, "Govinda ne aadhi baat boli thi. Maine Shilpa ko bola tha ki agar mai goli maarti toh pair par na maarti, seene par maarti (Govinda told a half baked story. I told Shilpa that if I had pulled the trigger, I would've shot him in the chest, not on his foot). Kaam karo toh poora karo, nahi toh mat karo (If you are doing something, do it well, otherwise don't do it)."

Recalling the incident, she said, "I wasn't in Mumbai, and Yash (son) was in Bangkok. I didn't tell him, but I also went to Khatu Shyam to offer prayers. The day he was shot, I was meditating in the morning. He was going to go to Kolkata for Durga Puja in the morning. My driver called suddenly, I generally don't answer calls during my meditation. However, he called twice, I think Govinda must have asked him to call me."

"My first question was, 'Isko maara kisne hai (Who shot him)?' He said, 'No, it was an accident'. I asked him not to panic and immediately rushed there. Even when I reached, I asked him, 'Tune khud hi maara hai kya? Laga bhi toh yahan par, jahan par lagna chahiye tha vahan nahi laga (Did you shoot yourself deliberately? It didn't hit you where it should have)?' He said, 'Khush toh bahut hogi tum (You must be really happy)'. Khush toh tab hoti jab seene mai lagta (Would have been happy if he was shot in the chest)," Sunita said.

"When he was shot, my servant, driver, and his bodyguard were present at the house. Tina was sleeping in the flat and he was at the bungalow. I called her and she rushed him to the hospital. I was continuously on call, taking regular updates," Sunita also mentioned.

Bigg Boss 18: Kamya Punjabi REACTS To Her Bashing Vivian Dsena; 'This Was All In His Favour...'



Bandish Bandits Season 2 has been one of the most talked-about shows since its release. And all eyes are on the leading lady of the show – Shreya Chaudhry. She has been soaking in all the love and appreciation coming her way. Recently the actress shared her inspiring fitness transformation story. As a young teen, Shreya struggled being overweight, often facing self-doubt. But the turning point in her life came in when she watched her idol Hrithik Roshan openly talk about his journey from struggling with injuries and weight gain to reclaiming his fitness. Shreya says, "I was always the chubby kid in the room. It felt like no matter what I did, I couldn't lose my weight enough. Maybe I wasn't motivated enough. Then came Hrithik Roshan and as a fan girl, his fitness journey has been truly inspiring. He spoke openly about his struggles and how he overcame them and I couldn't be more inspired to win one day at a time. I also wanted to take control of my own fitness." Shreya also shared some inspiring photos of her transformation on her social media and captioned it as, "Story time – I love every version of me, every single one reflects what I was going through mentally. No regrets. No looking back. I have wisened up and toughened up too. I did want to be fit though. Not for any other reason to begin with but just health. I was going through some stress and I was constantly advised to be active, and take care of my fitness and health.. I remember reading an article of @hrithikroshan (my forever crush) about being fit and how he handled his ups and downs. I have been one of Hrithik's biggest fans since I was a child and that article changed my life. In hindsight I think I owe my fitness journey to him. So, here it is ... an appreciation post for my cinematic idol who inspired me to take care of myself, to make my health a priority. You inspire millions including me."

She added, "Taking care of my health helped me pursue a passion that I always had ... acting.. so, here I'm .. punching through the good days and the bad days and keeping my eyes on the prize.. Thank you everyone for the love and the motivation.. ?? Here's to fitter 2025.""