CITY TALKS



**COOKING UP STORIES FOR CHEAP PUBLICITY': CAPT AMARINDER HITS BACK AT PARGAT SINGH** 

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY



**HCL TECH REPORTS NET** PROFIT OF ₹ 3,259 CRORE IN **Q2, DECLARES INTERIM** 



ARYAN RECEIVES MONEY **ORDER; SPEAKS WITH** PARENTS SHAH RUKH, GAURI **KHAN VIA VIDEO CALL** 

**India resumes Covid-19 vaccine** export

Petrol, diesel rates hiked again, day after record pump prices

Terrorists resorting to targeted killings in J-K to instil fear, says RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat

# Body of man, wrist cut off, tied to barricade at farmers' protest site

**NEW DELHI:** The body of a young man - with the left wrist severed and a pool of blood on the ground - was found tied to an overturned police barricade at the farmers' protest site on the Singhu border.

"At about 5 am on October 15, a body was found hanging with hands, legs chopped (off) at the spot where farmers' protest is underway (in Kundli, Sonipat). No info on who is responsible (and) FIR lodged against an unknown person. Viral video is a matter of probe... rumours will linger," Deputy Superintendent of Police Hansraj was quoted by news agency.

Initial reports say Nihangs - a 'warrior' Sikh group - are being blamed for the brutal and sickening murder, which took place in Kundli in Haryana's Sonipat district.

A video has emerged showing a group of Nihangs standing over the man - after his wrist has been cut off and he lies bleeding on the ground, his eyes glazed over in shock

The Nihangs, some of whom are carrying spears and stand surrounding his body, can be tell them his name and native village. None of the men in the video make any move to help the man or attend to the horrific wound.

Another video shows the man's body strung upside down with a rope - his left hand covered in blood - and a pool of blood on the floor.

Reports say the Nihangs beat the young man - who has yet to be identified - to death for allegedly desecrating the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikhs' holy book. They reportedly beat him to death, hung the body on the police barricade and then cut off the wrist. Sonipat Police cut down the body

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha, the umbrella body of farmers that is among those spearheading the protest will meet at noon to discuss this incident and issue a statement.

and took it to the Civil Hospital.

Last year there was another incident involving Nihangs - a Punjab cop had his hand

chopped off with a sword in

October 15, a body was found hanging with hands, legs chopped (off) at the spot where farmers' protest is underway (in Kundli, Sonipat). No info on who is responsible (and) FIR lodged against an unknown person. Viral video is a matter of probe... rumours will linger"

Patiala after he asked them to show them 'movement passes

Assistant Sub-Inspector Harjeet Singh recovered after extensive surgical procedures and has since been promoted. Three other cops who sustained injuries were awarded medals.

Farmers have gathered at Singhu (on the border with Delhi) for over a year now to laws; several farmer camps have been set up on the border over the past months.

Haryana Chief Minister ML Khattar was due to visit Sonipat this week to attend a public event.

However, after sustained protests from farmers (who have made it clear they will oppose any public appearance by any member of the ruling BJP). Khattar withdrew and sent a replacement.

cades, dug up roads and other materials used to block progress have been widely shared.

At about 5 am on

during the Covid lockdown.

Farmers> protests in Haryana have made major headlines since the agitation began, with violent clashes between protesters and police frequent. Scenes of encamped forces on both sides - divided by barri-

Tensions escalated in August when a top Karnal official was caught on camera ordering police to «crack their (farmers>) heads». This was during a lathi charge that saw 10 farmers

Kheri is "absolutely condemnable". Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said but qualified her statement by stating that such condemnation should be for all such incidents that happen in India and not just in a BJP-ruled state where her Cabinet colleague's son is "probably in trouble".

**NEW DELHI:** The killing of

four farmers in Lakhimpur

Asked why the PM and senior ministers had not spoken on the killings so far and why the BJP resorted to "defensive reaction" when

questioned about such incidents, Sitharaman, who is on an official visit to the US, said: "It's nice of you to have picked that one incident which is absolutely condemnable, every one of us say that. Equally, there are instances happening elsewhere, is my concern.

Broadly echoing PM Narendra Modi's observation over selective outrage over violation of human rights, Sitharaman also attacked economist Amartya Sen, who in June had said the Modi government

was focused on taking credit for its actions, resulting in schizophrenia that led to the second Covid wave.

Speaking during a conversation at Harvard Kennedy School on Tuesday, the minister said India had issues of such nature happening in different parts of the country. But many others, including Amartya Sen, raised it because "it's a state (UP) where the BJP is in power, one of my Cabinet colleague's sons is probably in trouble, and

ally them who did it and not anybody else. Due course of justice will also have an inquiry process to establish it."

Lakhimpur killings condemnable

but outrage selective: Sitharaman

On the issue of turning defensive on such issues, Sitharaman said, "I will talk for India. I will talk for justice for the poor. I will not be mocked. And if it is mocking, I will be defensive to stand up and say 'sorry, let's talk on facts'. That's my answer for you." Sitharaman defended the three farm legislations by pointing out that they had been discussed by several parliamentary panels for over a decade.

Indicating that the government would have no rethink on the farm laws, she said, "When the farm laws were brought in the Lok Sabha, there was an elaborate discussion. It was only when it came to the Rajya Sabha, there was a lot of noise and disturbance." "The highest amount of procurement, the largest-ever payment per farmer under the minimum support price (MSP) has happened in the last seven years," she asserted. "So we have not been told what it is that they're protesting against as yet and the minister is willing to talk even today," said Sitharaman. AGENCIES

### SIT takes Union Minister's son, 3 others to recreate sequence of events

LAKHIMPUR KHERI: The SIT probing the Lakhimpur Kheri violence took Union Minister Ajay Mishra's son and three others arrested in the case to recreate the sequence of events leading to the incident in Uttar Pradesh's Tikonia village.

Amid tight security, the accused were taken to the site of the incident on the Tikonia-Banbirpur road, around 60 km from district headquarters Lakhimpur city, police said. Eight people died in the October 3 violence and of them, four were farmers, allegedly knocked down by a vehicle carrying BJP workers. Infuriated farmers then allegedly lynched some people in the vehicles. The other dead included two BJP workers and their driver. In the incident, a journalist was also killed.

Farmers claimed that Union Minister Ajay Mishra's son Ashish Mishra was in one of the vehicles, an allegation denied by him and his father who say they can produce evidence to prove he was at an event at that time. Ashish Mishra 'Monu' was arrested in the case on October 9 after 12 hours of questioning, and a court has accepted his police custody from October 12 to October 15. The other three -- Shekhar Bharti was arrested on October 12, and Ankit Das and Latif alias Kale were arrested on October 13. Das, Latif and Bharti are in police custody from October 14 to October 17. Investigators reached the district jail premises in the morning to take Das, Latif and Bharti into police custody. The trio were taken to the crime branch's office at the Reserve Police Lines, which is near the district jail where main accused Ashish Mishra is lodged. They were taken to Tikonia village by the special investigation team (SIT) amid heavy security for further investigations, police said. AGENCIES

# Aryan Khan, now 'undertrial n956', moved to Mumbai jail's barracks

MUMBAI: Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan has been designated Undertrial Number N956 after being shifted to the barracks at Mumbai's Arthur Road Jail where he has been kept since his arrest in the this month.

Aryan Khan was shifted to a common cell after testing negative for COVID-19, the jail superintendent had said yesterday. Along with Aryan Khan, five other men who were arrested in the case too have been shifted out of the quarantine barrack in the jail, the official said.

"Arvan Khan and five others shifted to the common cell from quarantine barrack in the jail after their Covid report came negative," Nitin Waychal, superintendent of Arthur Road Jail said.

Aryan Khan, 23, was sent to the Arthur Road Jail after being placed under judicial custody. A Mumbai court reserved the order on his bail plea yesterday- the third since his arrest almost two weeks

No. 1 - sourced drugs and was in touch with "some persons the applicants cannot be conhe said.



abroad who appear to be a part of an International Drug Network for illicit procurement of drugs"

"WhatsApp chats reveal the accused was in touch with a foreign national for bulk quantity of hard drugs," the antidrug agency said, adding that the probe so far has revealed his role in the conspiracy.

All those arrested "are inextricably connected with each other" and "it is not possible to dissect the role, involvement of one accused from that of The Narcotics Control Bu- the other", said the NCB. "The reau or NCB has alleged that ingredients of conspiracy are Aryan Khan - named Accused clear and evident," said the agency, adding that "one of

sidered in isolation".

Arvan Khan's defence team has denied the allegation, saying that he was "not even on the cruise" raided by antidrugs officers, had no cash to buy drugs, and didn't have drugs on him.

Amit Desai, representing Shah Rukh Khan's son, said the NCB's raid started when he had not even checked into the cruise and that he had neither used drugs nor was anything found on him.

"The allegation of illicit trafficking is inherently absurd. This boy who has nothing, he was not even on the vessel. It is an absurd and false allegation, **AGENCIES** 

# Will follow what Gandhis decide'

**DOLLY CHOPRA** New Delhi

Even as party leaders stated that Sidhu had been ordered to boost the party organisation in Punjab, PCC chief had expressed his concerns to the party and would abide by any decision made by the Gandhis.

After a 90-minute meeting, AICC general secretary in-charge of Punjab affairs Harish Rawat said: "Sidhu clearly said today that any decision by the Gandhis would be acceptable to him and he would follow it.

"The party's orders to Sidhu are clear — to strengthen the party and the organisation in the state." Sidhu met AICC general secretary KC Venugopal and Rawat at the AICC headquarters and reiterated his concerns about Punjab. Venugopal later said the party would formally clear the air on Sidhu in 12 to 16 hours. There are indications that Sidhu may be asked to continue and some issues raised by him may be addressed. "I have conveved my concerns to the party. I have full faith in Congress president Sonia



Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandh. Whatever decision they take will be in the best interest of the Congress and of Punjab," Sidhu said after the meeting. Responding to queries on his resignation, he replied: "I have always considered the Gandhis supreme and have

followed their directions. Rawat said: "He will give you some good news soon." Rawat will brief Sonia on the discussions before the party clarifies matters within a day. Asked about whether the party would address Sidhu's concerns on which he appeared steadfast, Rawat replied: "He has said he trusts the leadership to do what's best for Punjab.'

### More trust, transparency in defence sector than ever before: PM



**NEW DELHI:** For the first time since Independence, many major reforms were rolled out in India's defence sector and it has more transparency and trust than ever before, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

After dedicating seven new state-run defence firms replacing the Ordnance Factory Board, the prime minister said a single-window system had been put in place instead of stagnant policies to develop India as a major producer of defence equipment.

"Under the self-reliant India campaign, the country's goal is to make India the world's biggest military power on its own and development of modern military industry in India," Modi said.

"In the last seven years, the country has worked to carry forward this resolve with the mantra of 'Make in India', he added.

In his video address at the event, Modi said that as India enters 75th year of Independence, projects are being completed that were stuck for a long time.

"Today, there is more transparency, trust, and technologydriven approach in the defence sector of the country than ever before. For the first time after Independence, so many major reforms are happening in our defence sector. Instead of stagnant policies, a single-window system has been put in place,' Modi said.

was need to upgrade ordnance factories, adopt new-age technologies, but it didn't get much attention, he said. The prime minister said that 41 Ordinance factories are being converted into seven corporate entities, as a measure to improve our self-reliance and defence preparedness. AGENCIES

### Global Hunger Index: India slips to 101st rank; behind Pak, B'desh and Nepal mortality (the mortality rate of cators such as the under-5

NEW DELHI: India has slipped to 101st position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 of 116 countries, from its 2020 position of 94th and is behind its neighbours Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Eighteen countries, including China, Brazil and Kuwait, shared the top rank with GHI score of less than five, the website of the Global Hunger Index that tracks hunger and malnutrition said. The report, prepared jointly by Irish aid agency Concern Worldwide and German organisation Welt Hunger Hilfe, termed the level of hunger in India "alarming"

In 2020, India was ranked 94th out of 107 countries. Now with 116 countries in the fray,



it has dropped to 101st rank. India's GHI score has also decelerated—from 38.8 in 2000 to the range of 28.8 -27.5 between 2012 and 2021. the age of five who are wasted

The GHI score is calculated on four indicators-undernourishment; child wasting (the share of children under

People have been severely hit by Covid-19 and by pandemic related restrictions in India, the country with highest child wasting rate worldwide"

i.e. who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition); child stunting (children under the age of five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition) and child

children under the age of five). The share of wasting among

children in India rose from 17.1 per cent between 1998-2002 to 17.3 per cent between 2016-2020, according to the report.

"People have been severely hit by Covid-19 and by pandemic related restrictions in India, the country with highest child wasting rate worldwide," the report said. Neighbouring countries like Nepal (76), Bangladesh (76), Myanmar (71) and Pakistan (92) are also in the 'alarming' hunger category, but have fared better at feeding its citizens than India,

according to the report. However, India has shown improvement in other indiall driving hunger.

mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children and prevalence of undernourishment owing to inadequate food, the report said. According to the report, the fight against hunger is dangerously off track. Based on the current GHI projections, the world as

a whole—and 47 countries in

particular—will fail to achieve

a low level of hunger by 2030. Food security is under assault on multiple fronts, it said, adding that worsening conflict, weather extremes associated with global climate change, and the economic and health challenges associated with the Covid-19 pandemic are

"Inequality—between regions, countries, districts, and communities—is pervasive and, (if) left unchecked, will keep the world from achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) mandate to "leave no one behind," the report said.

Further, the report noted that it is difficult to be optimistic in 2021 because the forces now driving hunger are overpowering good intentions and lofty goals.

Among the most powerful and toxic of these forces are conflict, climate change, and Covid-19—three Cs that threaten to wipe out any progress that has been made against hunger in recent years, it added **AGENCIES** 

After Independence, there

# 'Cooking up stories for cheap publicity': Capt Amarinder hits back at Pargat Singh

tre's decision to extend the BSF's jurisdiction in Punjab, among other states, has set a war of words between former Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and state minister Pargat Singh

Pargat Singh has slammed former chief minister, who voiced his support for the Centre's move and said that it will "only make us stronger".

Hitting back at Pargat Singh, Capt Amarinder accused him and Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu of 'cooking up ridiculous stories for cheap publicity'.

"This is the height of irresponsibility from a state minister. You and @sherryontopp are clearly birds of the same feather, with nothing better to do than cook up ridiculous stories for cheap publicity," Capt Amarinder's media adviser Raveen Thukral tweeted on former CM's behalf.

**Dubbing Amarinder Singh's** statement as unfortunate, Pargat Singh had said, "He acts like he is with the BJP.

With this order, Pargat Singh claimed, half of Punjab will come under the BSF's



The Centre wants to "later show Punjab as a disturbed state and push for the imposition of Governor's rule", he alleged.

Capt Amarinder Singh to blame for more powers to BSF: Pargat Singh

Dissent within the Congress over increasing BSF powers in the state came to fore with Cabinet Minister Pargat Singh, a confidant of PCC chief Navjot

Singh Sidhu, saying former CM Capt Amarinder Singh was hand-in-glove with the BJP.

He said the development smacked of a "design to impose Governor's rule in the state by tagging it as a disturbed state".

His statement came on the day when CM Charanjit Singh Channi called upon the former CM, along with his wife, newly-wed son and daughterin-law, at the latter's Siswan

farmhouse.

Shortly after Channi returned, Capt Amarinder hit back at Pargat Singh, saying: "This is the height of irresponsibility on the part of a minister. You and Sidhu are clearly birds of the same feather, with nothing better to do than cook up ridiculous stories for cheap

Addressing the media today, Pargat said: "What is Capt sa-

This is the height of irresponsibility from a state minister. You and @sherryontopp are clearly birds of the same feather, with nothing better to do than cook up ridiculous stories for cheap publicity"

hib trying to prove? I always said he is with the BJP. Earlier, when he went to Delhi and met Home Minister Amit Shah, paddy procurement was delayed by 10 days and now when he has gone to Delhi again, BSF's jurisdiction has been increased."

A bête noire of Capt Amarinder, Pargat Singh said: 'Captain sahib, please do not do this. We respect you a lot. The BJP should also understand that they cannot let Punjab become a disturbed state. It seems they want to impose Governor's rule. I want to tell them that we will not allow the BJP to be successful in its **AGENCIES** designs.

# Action against illegal private buses will continue: Punjab transport minister Warring

PATIALA: Punjab Transport Minister Amrinder Singh Raja Warring said the clampdown on private operators - who were running illegal buses - had already resulted in an increase in the income of the state-run Pepsu Road Transport Corporation (PRTC).

The minister - during his early-morning inspectioncum-visit of the Patiala bus stand - said the government would continue to impound all private buses running without paying taxes. "We will not spare anyone. The department will impound private buses that don't pay taxes. The clampdown yet far is just the beginning. The action against illegal private buses will continue," said Warring.

He assured the PRTC employees that he would work day and night to uplift the

The minister claimed that there were still many private buses running on the roads without paying taxes. "In the coming days, we will fix the accountability of the government officials of the area under whose jurisdiction private buses are found running

#### **Conductor honoured for his work**

PRTC conductor Milkha Singh, 28, was honoured by the minister for being the best conductor in the organisation. The minister gave Rs 5,100 from his own pocket to the conductor for his dedication and tireless work. Milkha Singh, said, "I am very happy, and the gesture will motivate me and other employees to work hard."

#### Minister enjoys tea at a stall

Refusing to have tea at the AC room, the minister - along with Patiala Mayor Sanjeev Sharma Bittu – sipped tea at a stall at the bus stand. The minister discussed various issues related to the improvement of the Patiala bus stand.



without paying taxes," he said. It has been learnt that the PRTC daily income has gone up from Rs 1.7 crore to Rs 1.87

crore. The minister attributed this to the collective efforts of

After interacting with the PRTC employees at the depot, the minister went to Patiala bus stand, metres away, and enquired from the passengers about the problems faced. Warring also inspected toilets at the bus stand.

Following a complaint, the minister went to a shop and found that packaged food items were being sold at higher prices than the MRP. Warring directed the Patiala General Manager to take action against the violators.

### Bhumi Pednekar talks about awards being gender neutral

awards.'

**KULBIR SINGH KALSI** Chandigarh

Young Bollywood star Bhumi Pednekar is the first leading actress in India to envision award ceremonies to be gender-neutral in the near future. Her reasoning is based on what's happening in award ceremonies the world over.

Recently, the Berlin Film Festival has awarded its first ever gender-neutral acting prize to Maren Eggert. The new award means both male and female actors now compete in the same category. The Gotham Awards announced that their best-actor and best-actress prizes are being combined into a single leadperformance category, starting with this year's November

that, beginning in 2021, any as performers is a step forward from China. "actor" or "actress" with the neutral term of "performer," even as they maintain genderseparated competition. The Venice Film Festival is also following the Berlin festival to award gender-neutral prizes.

Bhumi says, "Over the course of last year, it was

Deputy Commissioner

Ghanshyam Thori said that

as many as 1,02,973 muta-

tions have been initiated by

the officials in the district of which only 1919 mutations

are pending in the system

which is 1.86 percent of the

total initiated cases. He add-

ed that this performance has

placed Jalandhar as a top

performing district in ensuring mutation timely.

The DC further added

that after the integration of

the NDGRS system, regis-

tration of mutation is now

compulsory within 45 days

after the registration of prop-

erty. He added that after the

commencement of this new

system over one lakh muta-

tions have been registered by

the revenue officials within

this timeframe. He asked

the officials to clear all the

pending cases of mutation

so that zero-pendency could

be ensured in the district.

However, the pendency in

Jalandhar is more than half

the state average and concerted efforts were being

made to bring it to zero, he

**AGENCIES** 



**SATISH HANDA** 

Nearly 40% drop in production has been identified in country's biggest non-leather footwear industry hub at Bahadurgarh in Haryana due to shortage as well as heavy rise in the rates of basic raw material used in footwear industry. Pawan Jain President of United

hugely encouraging to see Footwear Manufacturing Industry Association Bahadurgarh told that award functions do away with gendered awards. Even from due to severe power crisis in China our context, if strong enough most of industrial units have either roles continue to be written for been closed down or running at women and other genders, we 25-40% of their production capaccan eventually reach a space ity as such there is no import of where we have gender neutral basic raw material and chemicals used manufacturing non-leather She adds, "An artiste should footwear from China and stockbe known for the kind of work ists in the country having stocks that one does and not seen of raw material including Ethfrom the lens of gender. I see vlene Vinyl Acetate (EVA), Poly Urathine (PU), Raxine, thread each one of us as artists who can do their bit to achieve and chemicals have increased rates two to three times in recent past The Emmys announced Bhumi feels calling all actors some time due to ban over export

> wear industry known all over in the world has been badly affected since past over 18 months due to COVID-19 followed by farmers agitation in the country since past over 10 months blocked all roads in the area as a result large number raw, real talent without the of manufacturing units had to suffer heavy business loss.

# Congress responsible for birth of terrorism & riots in India: Anil Vij SATISH HANDA

Ambala

Addressing media persons at his Ambala residence, Haryana Home & Health Minister Anil Vij reacting over the statements made by senior Congress leaders against ruling government in view of terrorist activities in Jammu-Kashmir and killings at Lakhimpur Kheri in U.P said, Congress is responsible for giving birth and grooming terrorism as well spreading riots when it was ruling in the country.

He said, one cannot forget incidents of 1984 riots in which countless innocent persons belonging to a community were killed on the sufferers by then Congress government. Vii said ruli

hesitated to arrest son of U.P efforts to wipe out terrorism caste of an accuse.



minister allegedly named in from Jammu-Kashmir. the case prior to investigation.

Vij raised a question on Congress leaders to clarify why no action was taken by then Congress government hue and cry in-spite of the fact ruling BJP government is takate action against ment believes in providing culprits involved in killings

Expressing deep concern made by Mebooba Mufti on the arrest of film star Shahrukh Khan's son Aryan Khan by Narcotic Department in a drug case blaming that the arrest was made since alleged accuse was 'Khan'. Vij said, BJP government

akes action against all ac cused on the basis of crime justice to everyone and not in U.P. and also making all irrespective of religion or

## Natural apples fetch good price for growers in HP



Shimla

Shakuntala Sharma, an apple grower from Theog in Shimla district, has a reason to rejoice. The apples produced in her orchard with natural farming technique fetched an unexpected price of over

Rs 100 per Kilogram this year. "The moment a buyer in the local market Dhamandri saw said he would purchase all at this price. I saved Rs 50,000-60,000 on the cost of cultivation also with non-chemical Subhash Palekar Natural Farming (SPNF), which is a big benefit," she said.

The woman farmer is practicing SPNF on land measuring 10 bigha, including an apple orchard on 5 bigha. The buyers of natural vegetables also come to her doorstep and give her good price.

The SPNF method is based on inputs made from desi cow's dung and urine and some locally available resources. The farm inputs for SPNF can be prepared at home. No chemical is used in this method.

"I was in financial stress as I faced multiple problems in my apple orchard due to on chemical sprays. But the shift to natural farming has helped me earn good profits in the last three years," said Ravinder Chauhan from Samoli Panchayat in Rohroo block of Shimla district.

Chauhan, who grows apples on 8 bigha of land with natural farming technique, sold one apple box (25 kilograms each) for Rs 4200-4500, includthe label of 'Natural Apples' ing the transportation cost, in states like Tamilnadu. Guiara and Karnataka. He said the fluctuation of prices in the normal market does not affect him much as his apples are chemical free, natural and healthy. "I fix the rate in advance," he said.

The non-chemical lowcost climate resilient SPNF technique is being promoted for agriculture and horticulture crops in Himachal Pradesh as a part of PK3Y, launched by the state government in 2018. According to the data shared by the State Project Implementing Unit (SPIU), PK3Y in Shimla, as many as 1.33,056 farmers are practicing natural farming in Himachal Pradesh (partially or fully) so far, involving an area of 7609 hectare. This includes 12,000 apple orchardists.

#### Home Minister Anil Vij hit on Navjot Singh Sidhu By initiating over one lakh mutations Jalandhar bags top position in lowest pendency in state: Ghanshyam Thori

in the right direction. She says

"We all know that we live in

a non-binary world and I feel

such steps will only promote

inclusivity. It will be a welcom-

ing step towards embracing all

genders. It is high time that we

break these walls and celebrate

**IF NAVJOT SINGH** JALANDHAR: In another SIDHU OBSERVES A distinction, Jalandhar has se-PERMANENT SILENCE. cured top position by ensur-THE CONGRESS AND ing maximum mutations of properties within stipulated **COUNTRY WILL GET A** time-frame and maintaining LOT OF PEACE: ANIL VIJ lowest pendency in the state.

> **SATISH HANDA** Chandigarh

Haryana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij while talking to media persons again hit on Punjab Congress President Navjot Singh Sidhu and said that "Navjot Singh Sidhu has observed a vow of silence, if he is keeping a fast of silence permanently, then the Congress will also get a lot of peace and the country will also get a lot of peace. Taking a jibe at the infight-

ing within the Congress, Vij said, this is Congress infighting and when a ship starts sinking, it starts to falter, in the same way, they are faltering again and again. This is indicating that the ship of Congress is about to sink.

The government is taking absolutely fair action in Uttar Pradesh, Vij said that regarding the incident of Lakhimpur in Uttar Pradesh government is taking absolutely fair action, wherever the arrest is required, it will be brought to an end without any discrimination. He said, action is being taken by the administration in Lakhimpur Kheri under what, when, against whom and this process is going on. Urging the farmers,. Vij said that farmer leaders should also take patience. Appreciating the farmers

of Haryana, Vij said that the



farmer of Haryana are very intelligent and know very well that burning of stubble damages the environment and also reduces the fertility of the land. Therefore, the farmer of Harvana are always cautious in this matter and the farmers are also informed about this from time to time by the government so that

whatever possible efforts can

be made to stop it.

#### direction of Congress political ruling in the country involve d leaders and none of them was in killing of innocents during arrested to provide justice to 1984 riots and now raising

# 2 thermal plant units trip, PSPCL woes surmount

**PATIALA**: The PSPCL met maximum power demand of 9,363 MW on October 13, while it purchased around 1,500 MW from power exchange at a rate of Rs 11.29

"Only 10 rakes of coal were received against the requirement of 22. However, there has been a noticeable change in weather with temperatures dropping, while the agriculture demand has also started to recede. So, the power demand has also started to decline, said A Venu Prasad, Chair-



man-cum-Managing Director, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited.

A unit each of Lehra Mohabbat and Talwandi Sabo thermal plants tripped, following which the PSPCL faces power shortage yet again. Already a unit each of these two plants is shut. A senior PSPCL official said:

"At present, we have two 660 MW units shut at Talwandi Sabo, 210 and 250 MW units at Lehra Mohabbat and a 210 MW unit at Ropar, which are not producing power. Though the situation is manageable right now, we hope domestic load will reduce in the next four days due to change in **AGENCIES** weather.'

# In-spite of 9 power plants lying shut, no electricity crisis in Haryana

try at present which include

increased consumption of elec-

tricity during present summer

season, growth in economic

condition and effect of rain

water flooded coal mimes in

present rainy season adversely

affected production of coal,

Drastic increase in the price

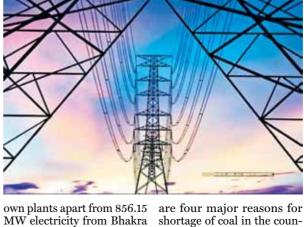
of coal imported from other

countries and lack of storage

**SATISH HANDA** 

Haryana Power Generation Corporation (HPGCL) was incorporated as company on 17 March 1997 and was given the responsibility of operating and maintenance of State>s own generating projects. The business of Generation of power of erstwhile HSEB was transferred to HPGCL on 14.08.98 pursuant to power reforms in Haryanaas a result, HPGCL came in existence for bringing in excellence in power generation in the states own Generating stations. In addition, it has been entrusted with the responsibility of setting up of new power plants in the state having power plants in Panipat, Yamunanagar, Hisar and Jhajjar districts.

Information reveals, production of electricity in Haryana state identified as 2582.40 Mega Watt (MW) recording 19.76% share from



MW electricity from Bhakra Beas Management recording 7.05% share, 3027.66 MW electricity from government in centre recording 25.21% share, 5762.20 MW electricity purchased from private sector recording 47.98% share and 1414 MW electricity from Adani Group recording 10% share.

Information reveals, there

of coal at power plants prior to 72.42 MW electricity produced rainy season is another prominent reason for shortage of coal n power plants.

Haryana Chief Minister Manoĥar Lal Khatter while talking to media persons told that there is no shortage of coal and electricity in the state at present purchasing electricity from outer sources because it is available at cheaper rates as compared to the cost of production in power plants in the state managed by HPGCL and situation is out of danger zone because of procuring electricity from outer sources. According to information, Haryana state presently requires 6959 MW electricity against availability of 7040 MW electricity as such in-spite of nine power plants having requirement of 45600 ton coal lying shut in the state not facing power crisis, however the power plants in the state producing 2582 MW electricity including

by hydel system are having stocks for emergency use for a period of over a week and situation for supply of coal will improve shortly since rainy season is almost over.

Information reveals, as many as nine power plants in the state producing electricity are lying closed and three electricity producing plants operated by coal are working. There are two power plants of capacity 300 MW each at Yamunanagar producing electricity. Similarly, out of two thermal power plants of capacity 600 MW each at Khedad one is lying closed at present. Mahatma Gandhi Power Plant at Jhajjar in Haryana producing 1198 MW electricity is being run by a private company. Similarly, power plant at Jhadli in the state in partnership with government in centre producing 589.5 MW electricity.

# Akhilesh attacks 'chillumjeevi' Adityanath, says BJP will never act against Union Minister Mishra

**HAMIRPUR:** Lashing out at the BJP, Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav said the saffron party would never act against the Union minister whose son has been arrested in connection with the Lakhimpur killings as it "stands with criminals", who are the happiest under the current regime.

In an indirect reference to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, he used the term "chillumjeevi". "Chillum" is a smoking pipe often used by "sadhus" On his "Vijay Rath Yatra"

here, Yadav said Adityanath has a liking for two things—the bull and the bulldozer—but the people of Bundelkhand have decided that the steering of the bulldozer, which is in their hands, will be snatched from him in next year's Assembly election. "They will run the bulldozer of votes on the BJP in the coming polls," he said.

Yadav was apparently referring to the stray cattle menace in Uttar Pradesh and the govern-Garmers and a journalist, were

ment's drive to raze buildings, the plans for many of which were not approved, in various parts of the state.

"The BJP will never act against the (Union) minister because it stands with criminals. in connection with the incident. If criminals are the happiest anywhere, it is under the BJP government," he said, replying to questions from reporters on the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

He warned the people against the "chillumjeevi" and asked them if they had understood who was he referring to. The SP president was ap-

parently referring to the chief minister distributing tablet computers and smartphones among youngsters recently.

Addressing a public meeting later, Yadav said, "When farmers protested against agriculture laws, they were crushed under the wheels of vehicles.

Hitting out at the ruling BJP over three contentious farm laws of the Centre, he said, "I want to tell the farmers of Bundelkhand, Uttar Pradesh and the country that the manner in which the BJP has brought the three black laws, it will crush you like the (four) farmers were crushed and killed in Lakhimpur Kheri."

"As of now, farmers and laws have been crushed, and the Constitution might also be crushed. So the BJP needs to be removed on the strength of votes," the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister added

gion, he said, "Maximum number of farmers have committed suicide in Mahoha, Hamirpur, Banda and the surrounding areas and after coming to power, the SP government will extend all facilities to the farmers here, be it irrigation or mandis."

He alleged that the three new farm laws brought by the Centre will force farmers to quit farming and make them labourers.

There is very less time left for the election. The BJP does not want to give the backward classes and Dalits their rights and therefore, a caste-based census has not taken place till now. It should be done as the BJP says that Yadavs have benefitted the most. I want to tell them that they are misleading the people," the SP chief

Reiterating his charge that projects launched during his tenure as chief minister have been re-inaugurated and renamed by the BJP government Line.

On the state of affairs in the water-scarce Bundelkhand rethat the current regime has sold away government assets.

He also alleged that in the name of a defence corridor in the Bundelkhand region, the land of farmers has been acquired but no industry has come

'This is the 'sutli bomb' (damp squib) of the BJP. They had shown the dream of a defence corridor and betrayed the poor people of Bundelkhand. These are people who tell lies and there is a need to be alert about them. Just think, if a yogi is telling lies, where will the people go, Yadav said.

Talking about the "samajwadi pension scheme" launched by his government, he said if needed, the amount under the scheme would be increased three-fold after the SP comes to power again.

The scheme, started by Yadav in 2014, provides a monthly pension of Rs 500 to families falling under the Below Poverty

'Naya naya Hindu' Akhilesh doesn't know difference

between Ram Navami and

Maha Navami: BJP

Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav invited the ire of the BJP over his tweet wishing people on the occasion of "Ram Navami" on a day when Hindus worldwide celebrate "Maha Navami", with the ruling party describing him as "naya naya Hindu".

In the tweet, Yadav extended his greetings to people on "Ram Navami".

Prominent among those who were quick to respond was Amit Malviya of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who pointed out that Ram Navami is celebrated in the month of "Chaitra" in the Hindu calendar, which falls in March-April, and during this period, people celebrate "Maha Navami", which is a day of worshipping goddess

"This is what happens when those who open fire on kar sevaks put up the drama of being Hindus with elections approaching," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

The official Twitter handle Navami.

**LUCKNOW:** Samajwadi of the Uttar Pradesh BJP posted two pictures side by side—one of Yadav and another of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath performing "kanya pujan"—and said "the difference is clear—nava naya Hindu (new Hindu) and Sanatani Hindu".

> "Akhileshji, who does not know the difference between Ram Navami and Maha Navami, talks about Ram and Parashuram. Do not fool the people (maat pehnaye topi), it looks better on you," it said. SP workers often wear

> red caps. The SP had announced that a 108-foot-tall statue of Lord Parashuram will be

> installed in Lucknow. The BJP has claimed that the SP president has withdrawn his tweet and his Twitter handle now convevs his wishes to people on Maha

BJP leaders also retweeted a similar tweet by senior Congress leader Anand Sharma. who wished people on Ram

### Surgical strike sent strong message to world on terror: Amit Shah

PANAJI: Talking tough against Pakistan over terrorism. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said surgical strike carried out by India five years ago sent a strong message to the world that no one can interfere with its borders. He said under the BJP-led

NDA rule, India gives a befitting reply to terrorist attacks which was not the case when the Congress-headed UPA was in power.

Shah was addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone for the National Forensic Science University at Dharbandora village in South Goa.

During the UPA government, terrorists from across the border used to infiltrate into India and cause unrest, and Delhi would do nothing, but now, India responds in the same language which they (terrorists) understand,

Referring to the 2016 surgical strike, Shah said India, through the military action.



Parrikar will be remembered for introducing One Rank One Pension for all the three wings of the armed forces under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi"

one can interfere with its

2016, across the Line of to the entire world that no Control (LoC) as a response said.

to a terrorist attack on an Army base in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

Shah recalled the contri-

bution of BJP stalwart late

killed in the October 3 violence

that erupted during a farmers'

protest in Lakhimpur Kheri.

Home Ajay Mishra's son Ashish

Mishra is among those arrested

Without taking any names,

Yadav said the "chillumjeevi" is

out to distribute tablet comput-

ers among students now and

wondered why such an initiative

was not taken in the last over

Union Minister of State for

Manohar Parrikar as defence minister. Parrikar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be remem-

bered for years for introducing One Rank One Pension (OROP) in the armed forces, the home minister said. "Parrikar will be remem-

bered for introducing One Rank One Pension for all the India had conducted the three wings of the armed forces surgical strike on September under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra

### Sri Lanka Navy arrests 23 Indian fishermen, seize 5 trawlers for alleged poaching

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 23 Indian fishermen and seized two trawlers for allegedly poaching in the country's territorial waters, an official statement

The Navy arrested the fishermen off the coast of Vettilaikeni in the northern province's point Pedro area.

"Taking into account the impact of foreign fishermen poaching in Sri Lankan waters on the local fishing community and the sustainability of fishery resources of Sri Lanka, the Navy is conducting regular patrols as well as operations to curb illegal fishing activities in island waters," the Navy said in a statement.

The operation also led to the seizure of fishing gear from those vessels, used for illegal fishing practice known as bottom trawling', and a stock of fish caught by the same fishing method.

In March, the Navy seized five fishing vessels and 54 Indian nationals for poaching in



Taking into account the impact of foreign fishermen poaching in Sri Lankan waters on the local fishing community and the sustainability of fishery resources of Sri Lanka, the Navy is conducting regular patrols as well as operations to curb illegal fishing activities in island waters"

to the Covid pandemic, the illegal fishing practices and seizure of foreign fishing ves- other illegal acts by foreign

sels became limited and the fishermen, with a view to proarrestees were repatriated. tecting the fishery resources The Navy would continue claimed by Sri Lanka and to carry out regular patrols in secure the livelihood of locan waters adhering cal fishermen the release **AGENCIES** The Navy said that due to Covid protocols, to prevent said.

# months



Active Covid cases

in India lowest in 7

NEW DELHI: India logged 16,862 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid cases to 3,40,37,592, while the active cases declined to 2,03,678, the lowest in 216 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The death toll climbed to 4,51,814 with 379 fresh fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The daily rise in new coronavirus infections has been below 30,000 for 21 straight days and less than 50,000

ported for 110 consecutive days now. The active

have been re-

cases comprise 0.60 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, while the national Covid recovery rate was recorded at 98.07



per cent, the highest since March 2020, the ministry said. The 379 new fatalities include 174 from Haryana, 96 from Kerala and 35 from Maharashtra.

Haryana added the death figures after the report of the

25,089 from Delhi, 22,897 from Uttar Pradesh and 18,945

### Centre notifies appointments of 7 more judges in three HCs

notified the appointments of seven judges to the high courts of Patna, Allahabad and Bombay.

Those appointed were: Advocates Sandeep Kumar, Purnendu Singh, Satyavrat Verma and Rajesh Kumar Verma to the Patna High Court; judicial officer Om Prakash Tripathi to the Allahabad High Court and judicial officers Anil Laxman Bombay High Court, the Department of Justice said in separate notifications. This is the fifth set of ap-

pointments notified by the chief justices of high courts government following the re- and five high court chief cent recommendations made by the Supreme Court collegium to fill judicial vacancies in made by the Supreme Court various high courts - most of collegium.

firm tracking consumer insights

and behaviour in its research on

mental wellbeing of people in

urban centres has shown that people in tier 2 cities are doing

much better on the wellbeing

ing Whitepaper released to mark

the World Mental Health Day,

index than those in metros. In its second Mental Wellbe-

Urban mental wellbeing index: Kochi,

Chandigarh best; Kolkata, Chennai worst

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre which have been functioning with lesser number of judges compared to their sanctioned strength.

Yesterday, the Centre had notified the appointments of 14 judges to the high courts of Telangana, Kerala and Orissa which will get seven, four and three judges respectively.

Earlier, it had notified the appointments of 17 new judges to the Allahabad, Madras and Gauhati high courts. On Pansare and Sandipkumar October 11, three advocates Chandrabhan More to the and two judicial officers were elevated as judges of the Rajasthan High Court.

Similarly, on October 9, eight judges were elevated as iustices were transferred based on recommendations

## MHA: BSF's jurisdictional power extended to secure border areas

THE ORDER IS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING **UNIFORMITY IN DEFINING THE AREA** WITHIN WHICH THE **BSF CAN OPERATE AS** PER ITS CHARTER OF **DUTIES AND EXECUTE** ITS TASK OF GUARDING **BORDERS** 

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre's decision to give additional jurisdictional powers to the Border Security Force (BSF) within the 50-km belt along the international borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh has created a political storm, with several political parties in Punjab and West Bengal terming it an "attack on federalism".

A notification by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs 11 conferred on BSF officers effectiveness in securing the the power to arrest, search, International Border (IB)."



jab, West Bengal, Assam, and

said, "The order is aimed at establishing uniformity in defining the area within which the BSF can operate as per its charter of duties and execute its task of guarding borders. This will also en-(MHA) issued on October able improved operational

Noting that the MHA has issued the notification amending the BSF Act, 1968, the official said that earlier, these limits were different in different states. In Gujarat, it was 80 km, while it was 50 km in case of Rajasthan, and 15 km in Punjab, Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Under Section 139 of the Act, the Centre has the authority to notify the area and extent of operation of the BSF, he added. **AGENCIES** 

han Bhagwat called population control as the need of the hour and cautioned the government about maintaining extra vigil on the borders.

Bhagwat said India should be cautious about the Taliban. "The Taliban may have changed, but have Pakistan and China changed?" he asked. "We need to be careful about all our borders," he said.

Bhagwat said people in Jammu and Kashmir are getting the benefits of doing away with Article 370. "Terrorists want to re-establish fear in the minds of people for their survival, that is why they are doing targeted killings, he said. "We must give a befitting reply to the terrorists," he said, speaking on the killings of civilians in J&K.

Bhagwat also called for

#### State Death Audit Committee, the ministry said. A total of 4,51,814 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,39,705 from Maharashtra, 37,922 from Karnataka, 35,853 from Tamil Nadu, 26,667 from Kerala,

from West Bengal.

# SKM condemns 'murder' at Singhu, says conspiracy to turn morcha communal

**FW BUREAU** 

New Delhi

The Samayukta Kisan Morcha today distanced itself from the incident where the body of a man was found tied to a barricade near Singhu border. The man was allegedly killed by a group of Nihangs for desecrating a sacred scripture of the Nihangs at Singhu. Condemning the 'be-adabi', the farmers' body also expressed disapproval of the alleged murder, asserting that

the kisan morcha is a struggle to get the new farm laws repealed and some "mischievous elements" are trying to give it a religious angle.

Addressing a press conference held shortly after the incident, senior SKM member Jagjit Singh Dallewal said, "No religious symbol should be disrespected and it is highly condemnable. That said, we are also against anyone taking the law in their hands to avenge any desecration." Sharing the details



of the deceased identified as Lakhvir Singh of Tarn Taran,

Punjab, he claimed that the man was living with the Nihangs for probe into the matter. some time. While replying to a question that Nihangs are part of the farmers' protest, Dallewal said that the morcha is a panworld revolution. "People from all sects and religions are part of the protest. Such incidents are handiwork of some mischievous elements who want to paint it with a communal brush and disrupt harmony. We cannot link the protest to

Denying that the SKM is not washing its hands off the alleged killing, the farmer leader again asserted that it was only to make farmers' protest a religious protest. "We will discuss the presence of Nihangs at the

said, demanding an impartial

protest site and take a call on it. Besides, we will also investigate which jathebandi of the Nihangs was involved in it," said Ruldu Singh Mansa, another senior one particular community," he SKM leader.

1,003 respondents across 16 cities between July and September 2021. It measured the nature of worry people had-health worry, economy worry, family worry and financial worry and their ability

TRA Research followed citizens across urban India and covered

**NEW DELHI:** An independent to cope with these challenges. The research found Tier 2 cities displayed the highest mental wellbeing scores. Kochi showed the highest MWBI (Mental Wellbeing Index) 2021 score followed by Lucknow and Chandigarh.

> wellbeing scores The worst mental health scores came from Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Chennai.

Indore and Jaipur were next

displaying very good mental

TRA Research said in the 2020 Whitepaper the highest anxiety of citizens across India was financial worry at 60 pc. This has been reduced to 47 pc **AGENCIÉS** in MWBI 2021.

and seize 50 km inside Pun-

A senior MHA official

### targeted killings in J-K to instil fear: Mohan Bhagwat NEW DELHI: RSS chief Mo-

**Terrorists resorting to** 

In his Vijaydashmi address,

freeing Hindu temples from the state control.AGENCIES



# Time to check the velocity of Gati Shakti Plan

ith the Gati Shakti National

Master Plan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expanded on the familiar theme that India's slowing economic growth engine can find renewed momentum through major infrastructure upgrades that will cut logistics costs for industry and raise all round efficiency. Essentially a technocentric administrative initiative that promises silo-breaking integration of 16 Ministries including railways, roads and ports through information technology, satellite mapping and data tools, the programme seeks to appeal to the national imagination as an umbrella integrator of Rs 111-lakh crore worth of projects under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) for 2020-25. The importance given in the plan to rail-road multimodal connectivity and higher share of freight for the railways — articulated also by NITI Aayog — has evident multiple benefits. This includes reducing the cost of logistics to GDP that has prevailed at about 14% even at the time the NDA government took office, to an aspirational 8%. There is also the challenge of reducing vehicular emissions from road freight growth to meet climate change commitments and containing input costs due to extraordinarily high taxes on diesel. The observations in the Economic Survey projects maximum investments towards NIP sectors, with about Rs 8.5-lakh crore to be invested by either side annually. As the effects of COVID-19 continue to be felt in terms of lost jobs, depressed wages and consumption, while the planners are pinning their hopes on infrastructure projects for a new deal outcome that will boost jobs and demand for goods and commodities, besides attracting major investments. Convincing citizens that they stand to benefit from such grand plans through better social welfare, lower service costs and higher efficiencies will be a tough task.



COVAXIN FOR CHILDREN APPROVED

**VACCINATION DRIVE** 

### If Covaxin is approved for the purpose by the DCGI,

the country will move a significant step closer towards starting the vaccination drive for tens of crores of kids in the age group of two to 18 years.

**INFECTIONS AMONG CHILDREN** 

With schools, coaching centres and sports complexes reopening gradually, the need for inoculation of youngsters cannot be overemphasised.

# **CONFIDENCE AMONG STUDENTS**

### major challenge will be to build

confidence among students and their parents and nip vaccine hesitancy in the bud.

#### **DOSES ADMINISTERED**

Of the 96 crore-plus doses administered so far in India, Covaxin's contribution has been barely 11 per cent.

### **OUTCOMES**

A lot of ground has to be covered to ensure that people most vulnerable to the worst outcomes get protection at the earliest.

#### **LETTERBOX**

Readers' feedback adds value to the newspaper. Please email comments on reports, features and columns to fwletters@ gmail.com. We will publish them on this page.

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**EDITOR\* ABDUL WASEY** 

(\*RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTION OF NEWS UNDER THE PRB ACT)

KV PRASAD ON WHY DEBATE IN US HOVERS AROUND EFFICACY OF CAATSA-RELATED CURBS AGAINST INDIA

# The sanctions cloud over India-U.S. ties



ne Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari, recently said that the delivery of the S-400 Triumf air defence systems from Russia is expected according to schedule. In response, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman hoped that both the U.S. and India could resolve the issue. The "issue' here is that receiving the missile systems could attract for India sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), enacted by the U.S. Congress. Ms. Sherman emphasised that the U.S. thinks it's "dangerous" for "any country that decides to use the S-400". India is scheduled to receive five squadrons of the surface-to-air missile systems under the \$5.43 billion (Rs 40,000 crore) agreement it signed three years ago.

Even though CAATSA was signed into law by then President Donald Trump in 2017, India stuck to its guns, signed the agreement with Russia a year later, and paid an advance in 2019. The missile systems were originally scheduled to be delivered between 2020 and 2023 and the supplies are expected to commence now. Both New Delhi and Washington have been in conversations over the deal. India has stressed on the tactical importance of the defence missile systems considering the environment in the Indian subcontinent.

The CAATSA was passed when the U.S. sought to discourage trade in the defence and intelligence sectors of Russia, a country perceived to have interfered with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The Act mandates the President to impose at least five of the 12 sanctions on persons engaged in a "significant transaction" with Russian defence and intelligence sectors. These sanctions include suspending export licence, banning American equity/debt investments in entities, prohibiting loans from U.S. financial institutions and opposing loans from international finance institutions.

The Act also built in a safety valve in the form of a presidential waiver. This was written into the law after much persuasion and is interpreted as one crafted to accommodate countries like India. Policy planners



on either side are aware of the law and the provisions to work around it. Ms. Sherman and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who came to India earlier this year, cannot be expected to announce whether India can secure a waiver from President Joe Biden when the time comes for the White House to make a decision.

The "modified waiver authority" allows the President to waive sanctions in certain circumstances. He has to decide whether the move is in American interest; does not endanger the country's national security; and affect its military operations in an adverse manner. In addition, he has to determine whether the country in question is taking steps to bring down its inventory of defence equipment from Russia and cooperating with Washington on matters of critical security. There are a few more provisions including one that allows for sanctions waivers for 180 days, provided the administration certifies that the country in question is scaling back its ties with Russia.

The debate in the U.S. hovers around the efficacy of such sanctions against India when the geopolitical situation in the region is undergoing a change. Today, there is a growing relationship between China and Russia with both countries seeking to expand engagement in Afghanistan from where the

U.S. withdrew its military after two decades of war. India turned sullen over the manner in which the U.S. negotiated the exit deal with the Taliban. Yet, on the strategic plane, India remained on course by agreeing to the upgrading of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and sharing the same vision as the U.S. on the Indo-Pacific construct.

Sanctions have the tremendous potential of pulling down the upward trajectory of the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and India, which now spans 50 sectors, especially in the field of defence. The U.S.'s apprehension is that bringing India under a sanctions regime could push New Delhi towards its traditional military hardware supplier, Russia. Till about a decade ago, an influential segment of the Indian political leadership and top bureaucracy remained wary of deeper engagement with the U.S. Sanctions can stir up the latent belief that Washington cannot e relied upon as a partner.

Over the last decade, India's military ourchase from Russia has steadily declined. India's import of arms decreased by 33% between 2011-15 and 2016-20 and Russia was the most affected supplier, according to a report by the Stockholm-based defence think-tank SIPRI. In recent years, though, there have been some big-ticket deals worth \$15 billion including S400, Ka-226-T utility helicopters, BrahMos missiles and production of AK-203 assault rifles.

On the other hand, over the past decade, government-to-government deals with the U.S. touched \$20 billion and deals worth nearly \$10 billion are under negotiation. The U.S. designated India as a Major Defence Partner in 2016. It later gave India Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 which allows access to critical technologies. Today, manufacturers in both countries are exploring ways to codevelop and co-produce military equipment.

There are advocates in the U.S. who strongly favour imposing sanctions on India following the U.S.'s decision to impose restrictions on its NATO ally, Turkey. China was the first country to attract the provision after it procured the S-400. Should India be treated with a different yardstick? A section of influential lawmakers in the Democratic Party hold a different view.

There are three clear steps in this regard. The first is the presidential determination on waiver; the second is the referral to the Congressional Committees; and the third s clearance by these panels. While referral to the Armed Services is spelled out, it is a distinct possibility that this will be sent to the Senate Foreign Relations Committees. This powerful committee, headed by Senator Bob Menendez, wrote to Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin ahead of his visit to New Delhi in March this year that he must inform India of the perils of the deal, while a Republican, Fodd Young, on the panel argued against it.

The CAATSA test will determine the course of the India-U.S. strategic partnership. Will the Biden administration sail through opposition within his party in allowing India a clear passage? While the administration will have to do the heavy lifting, the role of Indian-Americans should be significant just as they rallied around to support the historic Civil Nuclear Deal in the face of stiff resistance from Democrats opposed to nuclear proliferation.

K.V. Prasad is a journalist and former Fulbright-APSA Fellow with the U.S. Congress



KAILASH SATYARTHI EXPLAINS WHY ANY INVESTMENT IN HEALTH CARE HAS FAILED TO TRANSLATE INTO A SENSE OF SECURITY

# The next step is a constitutional right to health



he brevity of human memory is often a blessing and even necessary for our collective healing from suffering. But the lessons we learn from suffering are possibly even more crucial. As our people continue to face individual and collective grief as a result of the novel coronavirus pandemic, it is the moral responsibility of our leaders to look ahead and learn the

The lesson here is the need for the constitutional 'Right to Health for all'. The cracks in our health-care systems, and this is a lesson we cannot afford to ignore and

In June this year, I called on the Parliament of India to take immediate measures to make necessary amendments to the Constitution to declare health care a Fundamental Right. I was reassured with positive responses from parliamentarians across party lines who have supported this call. Now, the time has come to make this a reality for India so our people never have to undergo the suffering that they did.

The primary question raised is: what will a constitutional 'Right to Health' mean for a citizen of India? I will try and explain this through the lens of three categories of citizens: farmers and unorganised workers, women and children.

Farmers are the primary protectors of our fundamental right to life. Yet, the majority remain at a loose end when it comes to their



own rights and well-being, and that of their families. Without an anchor during times of severe illness or disease, generations of children of small and landless farmers, and unorganised, migrant and seasonal workers are thrown into bondage and debt by having to pay for medical costs from their limited earnings. Employment benefit schemes do not reach them, and the ones that do are mostly on paper. The implementation of the right to health can provide simple, transparent and quality health care to those who are most in need of such care.

Women bear a disproportionate burden of the gaps in our health-care system. The taboos and patriarchal expectations surrounding their health lead to immense

avoidable suffering. In addition, social and economic challenges prevent them from freely and openly accessing the little care that is available. A 'Right to Health' would mean that services reach the woman where and when she needs them.

A large number of children who belong to the poorest and most marginalised communities of our country grow up working in hazardous situations be it fields, mines, brick kilns or factories. They are either not enrolled in schools or are not able to attend family - often because of unexpected outof-pocket medical expenses.

#### Making it safer for children

My organisation has rescued over 1,00,000 such children from child labour, bonded labour, and trafficking. When rescued, these children are ridden with complex health impacts of working — primarily tuberculosis, skin diseases, eyesight impairment, and malnutrition, besides the substantial mental health impact. These children have been denied a safety net of early childhood care and protection, the consequences of which are felt for a lifetime. The 'Right to Health' will help transition the children in exploitative conditions into a safer future.

A constitutional 'Right to Health' will transform not only the health and well-being of our people but will act as a leap for the economic and developmental progress of the nation. Presently, any investment in health care fails to translate into a sense of security and sanctuary for the people of India. Instead, the complex and often corrupt means of accessing even existing health care only adds to the suffering instead of alleviating it. The vision for Ayushman Bharat will be strengthened with a constitutional 'Right to Health'. The immediate financial security that will come with the constitutional 'Right to Health' will be seen as a measurable impact on family savings, greater investment, and jobs creation on the one hand, and in the long-term emotional, psy social security of people.

### As a legacy

The world is taking steps, both big and small, in recovering from the pandemic through foresight in policy and investment. India must not lag behind. The right to free and compulsory education was arguably one of the most valuable legacies of the earlier Government. The true testament of bold leadership lies in its timely, compassionate and courageous decisions for the greater good. A constitutional amendment to introduce the 'Right to Health for India' can be the legacy of this Government.

Kailash Satyarthi, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, is an advocate of children's rights. He is also the founder of the Global Campaign for Education and the Laureates and Leaders for Children. Views



BOOKS: REVIEW

# Book on naval officer's secret mission in Pakistan in 1965

book based on the daring mission lead by India's Naval attache to Pakistan in 1965 Captain Jack Shea to bring back the first secretary and his family out of the country months ahead of the Indo-Pak war that year was launched here on Tuesday.

Written by the naval officer's daughter Debora Ann Shea, the book, titled "Escape from Pakistan", is grounded in years of examining archival resources, letters and diaries. personal accounts and the author's own bittersweet memories.

Speaking at the launch event, entrepreneur turned author Debora said that it was her attempt to "do justice to the service" her father had done for the nation.

"I have longed for this day for years...the times we were at home and he was at his perilous duty are still vivid and 'Escape From Pakistan' is just a written document of

with carefully examined archival resources, letters and diaries," she said. Captain Shea, who was posted

in Karachi as the Naval Attaché in the Indian High Commission, was given the task of pulling out the First Secretary and his family after the latter was "dangerously close" to being booked for espionage in Pakistan. While Shea managed to bring

the official and his family back to India in a cargo ship, he landed in trouble months after the war as he was drugged, beaten up by hitmen and thrown off a terrace that put him in coma for months.

"The attack on my father had come as a consequence of pulling out a marked diplomat. My father lay in the hospital for months as my mother doggedly sat outside the ICU room, afraid of another attack on his life," Debora recalled.

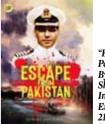
She added that after coming back

those bittersweet memories along **My father lay in the** hospital for months as my mother doggedly sat outside the ICU room, afraid of another attack on his life

> from the hospital nothing deterred him from his duty as he completed his tenure in Pakistan before coming back to India.

The doctors had declared he would never walk again. He did not accept the doctors' verdict and managed to walk, although the impact of the attack on his hand and wrist left it immobile," she said.

After returning to India, Shea received the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and assumed command of the 11th Destroyer Squadron of the Royal



"Escape from Pakistan" By Debora Ann India Penguin Enterprise; 216 Pages;

Indian Navy which played a pivotal role in the Indo-Pak war of 1971 before retiring as Commodore in 1976.

The book launch event was also attended by retired vice admiral Premvir Das, retired air marshal SP Singh, retired commander Keith Suares and Vijai Kapil.

The book is published by Penguin Random House India and is available

on online and offline stores. The author is the daughter of the protagonist. A heart felt and touching recount of a story that lived in her heart for decades. This book unveils that untold gripping story, authored by the late Commodore's daughter, Debora Ann Shea. I finished the page-turner in one reading. And so

will anyone who picks up a copy. Dewars, from the Indian Police Service, was deputed to Pakistan

before the 1965 war. He was a great asset in collecting information that kept the Indian forces a step ahead of Pakistan throughout the conflict. When Pakistan learnt about his role, they wanted to snatch him. On the Indian High Commissioner's orders, Garnet Milton Shea - the Indian Naval Attache also known as Jack Shea – outlined an extremely complex operation.

Relying on Pakistanis who worked for the Indian intelligence, Dewars got into a jeep driven by an Indian, Prabhiyot, who could pass for a Pathan and spoke Urdu and Punjabi well to reach from Karachi to a village close to the Indian border, a distance of 200 km. If nothing went wrong, the journey would consume about six hours.

But this was the one and only chance to escape; there was no scope for failure. Dewars, who knew no Hindi or Punjabi, was given the identity of an Arab immigrant from Somalia (name Bashir Ali) who had been working for a Pakistani landlord tending to his sheep and goats. He was prepared for a cameral ride - for the final lap until he crossed

over India.

ALSO READ | RBI LIKELY TO HIKE RATES FROM FIRST QUARTER OF 2022: REPORT \* P7 | Rs 4,445-CR SCHEME TO SET UP SEVEN MEGA TEXTILE PARKS \* P7

### **NEWSBRIEF**

Adani Group takes over operation of Thiruvananthapuram International airport



PURAM: The Adani Group has taken over the operation, management and development of the international airport in Thiruvananthapuram,

saying it is now a Gateway to Goodness. Announcing the formal takeover of the airport, the business giant said in a tweet that it was privileged to serve and welcome passengers to God>s Own Country. "Connecting lives with cherished travel experiences, we are pleased to share that #ThiruvananthapuramAirport is now a #GatewayToGoodness. We are privileged to serve and welcome passengers to God>s Own Country filled with lush greenery, beautiful beaches, and exquisite cuisine», the group said in the tweet, both in English and Malayalam, past midnight. The group took over the operations of the airport despite protest by both ruling LDF and opposition UDF against handing it over to private players. Last year, the Kerala Assembly had unanimously passed a resolution protesting the privatisation of the airport. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had criticised the takeover of the airport by the Adani group, saying it was not for the development of the facility but to protect the interest of monopolies.

Infosys profit rises to ₹ 5,421 crore in Q2, revenue guidance raised on higher demand

Thiruvananthapuram

International Airport is the

first of four airports in the

state. Established in 1932.

the airport was owned and

thority of India. AGENCIES

operated by Airports Au-



**NEWDELHI**: Infosys announced its July-September quarter results for the financial year 2021-22 on Wednesday, October 13, reporting a net profit of Rs 5,421 crore, up 11.88 per cent year-on-year, on a consolidated basis. The country's second-largest information technology (IT) services provider by market value, raised its annual revenue guidance as pandemic-led digital services demand helped the company in securing large deals from global businesses looking to expand their digital offerings. AGENCIES

# FinMin meets us corporates, pitches for investments

**NEW DELHI:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman discussed investment opportunities, reforms in India and other related issues during her meeting with leaders of global corporations in the US, who said they were upbeat about investing in the country.

Sitharaman had arrived in that country to attend the annual meet of the World Bank and IMF in Washington as well as G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FM-CBG) meeting.

During the official visit, the finance minister is expected to meet US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen.

After arriving in New York, Sitharaman travelled to Boston where she will meet investors during a roundtable hosted by FICCI and US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) and executives of global corporations and also address students at Harvard University

Prominent among those who met the minister in Boston were John Connaughton co-managing partner and Stephen Pagliuca, co-chairman of Bain Capital; Edmund DiSanto, Executive Vice President, Chief Administration Officer and General Counsel of American Tower Corporation (ATC);



Prahlad Singh, President and CEO of Perkin Elmer and Dr John Ardill, Senior Vice President of ExxonMobil.

Expressing their confidence in the Indian economy and the ongoing reforms, the corporate leaders said that they were upbeat about investing in the

Sitharaman also attended dinner hosted by Lawrence Summers, former Treasury Secretary, along with other eminent experts in the fields of economics, public policy, finance, and development.

"The finance minister elucidated the intent of the country

opment and growth," Prahlad Singh said after his meeting with Sitharaman in Boston.

In a wide-ranging discussion with the minister, Singh stated that some of the best science graduates and skill sets that Perkin Elmer as a company everage, come out of India.

He said that Indias healthcare industry is ripe for invest-

Singh added that amid the COVID-19 pandemic, products that have been developed in the company>s facilities in Goa are being used and exported outside the country for use for COVID-19 testing.

In her meeting with ATC>s

#### DiSanto, the minister highlighted reforms including National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) for private sector investment towards new infrastructure creation in brownfield infrastructure assets.

Opportunities in India steering foreign collaborations and attracting Foreign Direct Investment in the next five years under NMP through investment in strategic sectors, including telecom, formed part of discussion, the finance ministry said.

ATC, which has 76,000 towers in India, aims to expand operations in the telecommunications sector by adding another 4,000 towers

"So we>ll make an incremental investment in the ordinary course even in the pandemic that>>ll bring us to 80,000 (towers)." DiSanto said.

ATC India is among the passive telecom infrastructure providers in India and is an indirectly-held subsidiary of American Tower Corporation.

«I see that the moves that the government of India has made recently has sent a very powerful message to the world of western investors, indicating a new receptivity and a new system that I think does encourage the opportunity,» DiSanto said after his meeting with **AGENCIES** 

# **HCL Tech reports net profit of ₹ 3,259** crore in q2, declares interim dividend

NEW DELHI: HCL Technology announced its July-September quarter results for the financial year 2021-22, reporting a net profit of Rs 3,259 crore on a consolidated basis, compared to Rs 3,143 crore in the corresponding month last year, marking a growth of four per cent year-

The IT major's revenue from operations in the second quarter of the current fiscal stood at Rs 20,655 crore, compared to Rs 18,594 crore, registering a growth of 11.3 per cent year-on-year, according to a regulatory filing by the company to the stock exchanges today. HCL Tech said that it expects revenues to grow in double digits in constant currency for 2021-22.

HCL Tech's net income in the September quarter stood at Rs 3,265 crore, up 3.9 per cent year-on-year and its total income stood at Rs 20.895 crore on a consolidated basis. The company's board declared an interim dividend of Rs.10 per equity share of Rs.2 each of the company for the financial year 2021-22. The payment



deals which helped us to record net new booking of \$2.3 B, a growth of 38 per cent YoY. Our net employee addition hit an all time high of 11,135 this quarter,", said C Vijayakumar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Managing Director, HCL Technologies.

"Services revenue (ITBS & ERS) grew strongly at 5.2 per cent QoQ in constant currency, with stable EBIT. P&P growth was impacted due to delays in closure of certain deals. Client mining has been healthy across all categories, notably, the number of \$ 50 million clients now stand at 41 (Up 12 YoY)," said Prateek Aggarwal, Chief Financial Of-

On October 14, shares of HCL Tech settled 1.17 per cent lower at Rs 1,250.90 on the BSE. HCL Tech opened at Rs 1288.00, touching an intra day high of Rs 1,293 and an intra day low of Rs 1,244.35, throughout the trading ses-

TPG group to invest

₹7,500 cr in Tata

**Motors' electric** 

vehide arm

ficer, HCL Technologies.

# Wipro's September quarter profit falls to Rs 2,930 crore

**NEW DELHI:** Information Technology (IT) major Wipro witnessed a fall in its net profit for the second quarter of 2021-22, which at Rs 2,930 crore was lower than Rs 3,242 crore of the June quarter of the current fiscal.

The quarter on quarter fall was mainly due to contraction in the company's margins after effecting a wage hike and ammortisation charges on Capco's acquisition. Wipro had wrapped up the acquisition of London-based The Capital Markets Company (Capco) for \$1.45 billion in April 2021. Capco is a consultancy firm in the banking and financial services sector. Revenues from IT services



the September quarter, vis-à-vis that of Rs 18,252.4 crore recorded in the previous quarter. Commenting on the results,

Wipro's CEO and Managing Director Thierry Delaporte said, "the second quarter results demonstrate that our business strat-

over 4.5 per cent organic sequential growth for a second quarter in a row, resulting in a 28 per cent year on year growth in the first half of this financial year. I thank our customers, partners and colleagues as we surpassed the \$10 billion milestone of annualised

# increased to Rs 19,760 crore in egy is working well. We grew at revenue run rate." AGENCIES

### No hostile transactions, says Reliance on reports it wanted to buy Zee NEW DELHI: Reliance In-

dustries Limited (RIL) issued a clarification that though it was interested in Zee Entertainment's acquisition, the deal fell through and that it regretted being drawn into the dispute between the entertainment conglomerate and its US-based investor, Invesco, further stating that it never resorted to any "hostile transactions".

"We regret our being drawn into the dispute between Zee and Invesco. The reports in the media are not accurate. In February/ March 2021, Invesco assisted Reliance in arranging discussions directly between our representatives and Punit Goenka, member of the founder family and Managing Director of Zee. We had made a broad proposal for merger of our media properties with Zee at fair valuations of Zee and all our properties," RIL said in a statement.

The clarification from Mukesh



Ambani's company came after Invesco earlier stated that it had brought in RIL to help it acquire Zee Entertainment.

Reliance further said that the "valuations of Zee and our properties were arrived at based on the same parameters... However, differences arose between Goenka and Invesco with respect to a requirement of the founding family for increasing their stake by subscribing to preferential

stake through market purchases. At Reliance, we respect all founders and have never resorted to any hostile transactions. So, we did not proceed further". RIL noted that differences

between Zee and Invesco arose as the proposal included continuation of Goenka as Managing Director and issue of ESOPs to management, including Goenka. At this point, the proposed talks fell through as Invesco has long been seeking changes in the management of Zee Entertainment, and wants Goenka removed. nvesco, which owns almost 18 per cent stake in Zee, has alleged financial irregularities and has been seeking holding of an extraordinary general meeting of the board and shareholders to facilitate appointment of six new independent board members and removal

### **NEW DELHI:** Billionaire

Reliance arm to invest in Germany-based Nexwafe

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries today announced that its wholly-owned sub-sidiary Reliance New Energy Solar Limited (RNESL) has entered into an agreement with Germany-based Nex-Wafe GmbH (NexWafe) for acquiring 86,887 series C preferred shares of face value of EUR 1 each. Reliance New Energy Solar

Limited will also be issued 36,201 warrants which are exercisable for a consideration of EUR 1 per warrant subject to achievement of agreed milestones, according to a regulatory filing by the conglomerate to the stock exchanges. The transaction is proposed to be completed by end of this month. The Reliance arm and

NexWafe also entered into an India Strategic Partnership Agreement for joint technology development and commercialization, - at scale of high-efficiency monocrys-



according to the statement. As part of the India Strate-

gic Partnership Agreement, the Reliance arm will secure access to NexWafe's proprietary technology and plans to build large-scale wafer manufacturing facilities in India using the NexWafe processes and technology. The acquisition is not a related party transaction and none of the promoter or the promoter group/group companies have interest in NexWafe.

The investment by the Reliance arm will accelerate product and technology development for the Germany-based firm, including the completion of commercial development of NexWafe's solar photovoltaics products on prototype lines in Freiburg, added Reliance in its statement. On October 12, shares of

Reliance Industries settled 0.66 per cent higher at Rs 2,668.55 apiece on the BSE. Reliance opened on the BSE at Rs 2,641, swinging to an intra day high of Rs 2,682.75 and an intra day low of Rs 2,641, throughout the trading

### to be of the view that the founders could always increase their Urban Company hikes service prices, cuts commissions to improve partner earnings

**NEW DELHI:** Home services marketplace Urban Company increased the prices of several high demand services across categories and also slashed commission charges of its beauty services professionals, among a slew of other changes announced to improve the livelihood and payouts of its service professionals

In an official blog post on October 14, the on-demand home and beauty services platform released a 12-point agenda to improve "partner

earnings and livelihood". The development comes days after more than 100 partners - majority of them women professionals from the spa and salon verticals, protested outside the company's Guru-



gram headquarters, demanding better pay, safer working conditions, and social security benefits, according to media reports. Urban Company - formerly Urban Clap, announced that it will slash the highest commission it charges beauty service professionals - majority of them being women partners, from 30 per cent to 25 per cent, among other things.

Earlier, commissions ranged from 8.5 per cent for small orders to 30 per cent for highticket orders - and now it will range from 8.5 per cent to 25 per cent. The highest slab currently applies to the high value orders and the change will help partners earn more on high value orders, according to the company's statement.

In terms of changes for customers, Urban Company said that it will "marginally" increase prices of several high demand services across categories to improve the take-home pay/ earnings of their partners.

The company recently introduced cancellation fee to discourage customers from making last-minute cancella-

announced that TPG Group, a private equity firm and Abu Dhabi's ADQ will invest Rs 7,500 crore in its electric vehicle entity, which will be newly incorporated. The entire investment will be made in different tranches over an 18-month period, starting from the date of completion

**NEW DELHI:** Tata Motors

of the first tranche. The first instalment of capital infusion will be done by March 2022 while the entire process will be completed by end of 2022.

Tata will incorporate a sepawhich TPG and ADQ will get between 11 per cent and 15 per cent stake at an equity valuation of \$9.1 billion.

"I am delighted to have TPG Rise Climate join us in our journey to create a marketshaping electric passenger mobility business in India. We will continue to proactively invest in exciting products that delights customers while meticulously creating a synergistic ecosystem. We are excited and committed to play a leading role in the Government's vision to have 30 per cent electric vehicles penetration rate by 2030," Tata Motors Chairman N Chandrasekaran said.

Apart from Tata Motors foray in the electric vehicle business, Mahindra & Mahindra had also announced that it will invest Rs 3.000 crore in the next three years to build an electric vehicle

# Billionaire Alibaba Founder Jack Ma reappears in Hong Kong: Report

ON SEPTEMBER 1, PHOTOGRAPHS OF MA **VISITING SEVERAL AGRICULTURAL GREENHOUSES IN THE EASTERN ZHEJIANG PROVINCE, HOME** TO BOTH ALIBABA AND ITS FINTECH **AFFILIATE ANT, WENT VIRAL ON CHINESE SOCIAL MEDIA** 

HONG KONG: Alibaba Group founder Jack Ma. largely out of public view since a regulatory clampdown started on his business empire late last year, is currently in Hong Kong and has met business associates in recent days, two sources said.

The Chinese billionaire has been keeping a low profile since delivering a speech in October last year in Shanghai criticising China>s financial regula-

That triggered a chain of events that resulted in the shelving of his Ant Group's mega IPO. While Ma made a limited number of public appearances in mainland China after that, as speculation swirled about his whereabouts, one of the sources said the visit marked his first trip to the Asian financial hub since last October.

Alibaba did not immediately respond to requests for comment outside of its regular business hours



Comments from Ma typically come via the company. The sources declined to be identified due to confidentiality constraints.

Ma, once China>s most famous and outspoken entrepreneur, met at least «a few» business associates over meals last week, said the people.

Ma, who is mostly based in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou, where his business empire is headquartered, owns at least one luxury house in the former British colony that also houses some of his companies> offshore business operations.

Alibaba is also listed in Hong Kong, besides New York. The former English teacher disappeared from public view for three

months before surfacing in January, speaking to a group of teachers by video. That eased concern

about his unusual absence from the limelight and sent Alibaba shares surging.

In May, Ma made a rare visit to Alibaba>s Hangzhou campus during the firm>s annual 'Ali Day' staff and family event, company sources have said. On September 1, photographs of Ma visiting several agricultural greenhouses in the eastern Zhejiang province, home to both Alibaba and its fintech affiliate Ant, went viral on Chinese

The next day, Alibaba said it would invest 100 billion yuan (\$15.5 billion) by 2025 in support of «common prosperity», be-

social media.

coming the latest corporate giant to pledge support for the wealth sharing initiative driven by President Xi

Alibaba and its tech rivals have been the target of a wide-ranging regulatory crackdown on issues ranging from monopolistic behaviour to consumer rights.

The e-commerce behemoth was fined a record \$2.75 billion in April over monopoly violations. Earlier this year, regulators also imposed a sweeping restructuring on Ant, whose botched \$37 billion initial public offering in Hong Kong and on Shanghai's Nasdaq-style STAR Market would have been the world's largest.

**AGENCIES** 

ALSO READ | HARDIK PANDYA CELEBRATED HIS BIRTHDAY WITH HIS 'BEST FRIEND' \* P8 DINESH KARTHIK REPRIMANDED FOR BREACHING IPL CODE OF CONDUCT \* P8

# Bank FD to fetch negative real interest with elevated inflation

and others depending upon income from bank fixed deposit (FD) schemes will be at the receiving end with the retail inflation exceeding the interest rates.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its latest monetary policy review has projected retail inflation at 5.3 per cent for the current financial year.

Last week, the RBI said the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation is now projected to be at 5.3 per cent for 2021-22 with risks evenly balanced.

At this level, the fixed deposit for one year with the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) would rather earn negative interest. The real interest rate would be (-) 0.3 per cent for the saver.

Real rate of interest is card rate minus inflation rate. The retail inflation for August stood at 5.3 per cent.

Even for higher tenure 2-3 years, the interest rate earned is 5.10 per cent lower than expected inflation for the cur-



market leader HDFC Bank offers 4.90 per cent interest rate for 1-2 year fixed deposits while 5.15 per cent for 2-3

However, small savings schemes run by the government offers better return compared to fixed deposit rates of interest is in the positive ter-

In the private sector, the banks. For term deposits 1-3 vears, the interest rate offered is 5.5 per cent higher than inflation target.

There is natural advantage of moving money from bank FD to government saving schemes as rates are slightly higher. Thus, the real rate of

tives guide people into making the right investment choices, Grant Thornton Bharat part-The present average ner Vivek Iyer said. savings deposit rate

"A negative rate of interest, for savers on bank deposits, these days, is a reality, which the depositors have to face because of a complex set of factors.

"The present average savings deposit rate offered by banks which is around 3.5 per cent and less than five per cent rate on one year deposit indicates a negative return, not even covering the expected inflation rate," Resurgent India Managing Director Jyoti Prakash Gadia said.

The impact of negative interest on bank savings deposits is obvious, with lower growth of such deposits and the public now seeking alternatives like mutual funds and equity for better returns.

The options although involving more risk have shown phenomenal growth which is likely to continue till inflation is tamed or bank deposit rates are substantially increased,

NEW DELHI: Just a day after Infosys CEO Salil Parekh said that the e-filing portal for income tax returns is making "steady progress" and that taxpayers' concerns are being addressed,

the government said that more than two crore income tax returns (ITRs) have been filed through it till date and the platform has "substantially stabilised". Urging tax payers to file their returns for the fiscal

2020-21 at the earliest, the last date for which is December 31, 2021, the income tax department in a statement said that more than 1.70 crore returns have been e-verified and of these, 1.49 crore were done through Aadhaar based one-time password (OTP) system.

The process of e-verification through Aadhaar OTP and other methods is important for the department to commence processing of the ITR and to issue refunds,

Of the verified ITRs 1 and 4, more than 1.06 crore ITRs have been processed and over 36.22 lakh refunds for the AY

2021-22 have been issued. Processing of ITRs 2 and 3 will be taken up shortly, the department said.

**Government says e-filing portal** 

now stable, 2 crore returns filed

The new e-filing portal was launched on June 7 this year and soon after, users nad started complaining of glitches, which led to the finance ministry summoning Infosys officials (the company has designed the portal) and asking it to fix the issues. Due to these problems, the government had to extend the deadline for filing returns

However as problems per-

nance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had called Parekh and gave the company time till September 15 to address concerns of taxpayers.

Though nothing was heard about the issue after that, during Infosys' second quarter financial results declaration, Parekh on October 13 said that the portal was making "steady progress" and all concerns are being "progressively addressed".

He however did not give any indications as to by when the technical issues will be sisted with the platform, Fi-fully resolved. AGENCIES

## RBI bans Srei Infra's auditor for two years

MUMBAI: In an unprecedented move, the RBI banned one of the country's top chartered accountant firms Haribhakti & Co LLP from undertaking any type of audit assignments for regulated entities for a period of two years starting April 1, 2022. Unprecedented move This is the first time that the RBI has taken such action against an auditor of any systemically important NBFC Haribhakti & Co LLP was the auditor of Srei Infrastructure Finance Limited (SIFL), whose Board was superseded by the RBI and insolvency proceedings were initiated last week. The term of the firm expired with the conclusion of the 35th annual general meeting (AGM) held on September 19, 2020. AGENCIES

#### Rally continues, Sensex, Nifty jump to record high

MUMBAI: Equity gauges Sensex and Nifty climbed to new record high, stretching their winning run to the fifth consecutive session, 's continued to lan ur auto, power and infra shares. After scaling a lifetime intra-day high of 60,836.63 during the session, the Sensex settled 452.74 points higher at 60,737.05 —its all-time closing high. Similarly, the Nifty rallied 169.80 points to a new closing peak of 18,161.75. It also touched an intra-day record of 18,197.80. M&M was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, zooming over 5%, followed by PowerGrid, ITC, L&T, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel and Titan. On the other hand, Maruti Suzuki, HUL, Nestle India, Axis Bank and SBI were among the laggards. "Auto stocks led by Tata Motors propelled the Nifty to new highs of 18,200 with good support from infra and metal stocks on the launch of the Master Plan for Infrastructure Development and Multi-Modal Connectivity," S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP securities, said. Tata Group stocks hogged the limelight despite profit-taking in late afternoon trade, he added. **AGENCIES** 

# SBI's multi-currency foreign travel card

**NEWDELHI:** State Bank of India's (SBI's) Multi-**Currency Foreign Travel** Card is a prepaid capital that can be loaded with money in multiple currencies. According to the country's largest lender, the card can be used used at ATMs (automatic teller machines) and merchant points abroad.

«Using this card, customers can withdraw cash from over 2 million ATMs and pay for goods and services in shops, restaurants and hotels at 34.5 million merchants worldwide,» SBI said in a release

Features Of SBI's Foreign Travel Card:

- Chip and PIN (personal identification number) protected prepaid travel
- Can be used for seven different currencies (US Dollar, British Pound, Euro, Singapore Dol-Canadian Dollar and UAE Dirham); Additional card available
- for backup; □ Round the clock global

assistance with free replacement of card if lost or stolen;

- No bank account information is required;
- ☐ Reloadable until the expiry date on the card with valid passport and Form A2. Form A2 is FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) declaration for the purchase of forex for remittance purposes.

#### **How To Apply:**

☐ This card can be availed by either visiting the nearest SBI branch or by logging on to the banks official website. **AGENCIES** 

## CBDT exempts certain non-residents, foreign investors from filing ITR FY21 onwards

**NEW DELHI:** The income tax department has exempted certain non-residents and foreign investors from filing Income Tax Return (ITR) from 2020-21 onwards, a move aimed at easing compliance burden.

offered by banks

per cent and less

which is around 3.5

than five per cent rate

on one year deposit

indicates a negative

covering the expected

Experts said that it is a usual

phenomenon that real returns

are negative in a crisis and

post-recovery world, given the

way fiscal stimulus to over-

fact, new asset allocation pat-

terns would need to emerge,

with more allocation to real

Real rates are going to be

negative for a while, given that

the post crisis repairs may take

some time and it is imperative

that financial literacy initia-

assets from financial assets.

India is no exception and in

return, not even

inflation rate"

come difficulty.

Through a notification, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said non-residents (corporates/ otherwise) who do not earn any income other than income from investment in 'specified fund', being Alternate Investment Fund Category III located in International Financial Services Centres (IFSC) or GIFT city shall not be required to file ITR.

Further, eligible foreign investors (non-residents who operate in accordance with SEBI instructions), who during the financial year, have only transacted in capital asset like Global Depository Receipts, Rupee Denominated Bonds, derivatives or other notified securities, listed on recognised stock exchange in IFSC, have also been exempted from ITR filing. This is subject eration for transfer of such asset is discharged in foreign currency and no other income is earned by such class of persons in India.

However, in both the cases

above, these classes of non-resmove doesn't impact the governidents shall have to ensure that ment kitty. "Exempting such non-residents they are exempted from the re-

quirement of obtaining PAN. As per I-T rules, PAN is not required if tax has been duly deducted on income of non-residents and remitted to the government by the 'specified fund'. Additionally, requisite details and documents like contact information, TIN and residential status declaration, are submitted by the non-resident to the 'specified fund'.

r Neha Malhotra said since the information regarding the taxpayers exempted from filing ITR and deduction of tax at source, this in India.

from the obligation of filing the return of income, simply eases their compliance burden. Reducing the compliance burden on taxpayers reflects on the country's efficient tax administration, which will further improve investor confidence," Malhotra said.

Tax and consulting firm AKM Global, Tax Partner Amit Maheshwari said the notification has pro-Nangia Andersen LLP Direc- vided that the overseas investors who invest in a fund operating in government has all the tax related Gift City and having income from such funds shall not be required to file the tax return in India provided their income is also subject to they don't have any other income **AGENCIES** 

### How to setup UPI app's auto-pay facility to make recurring payments

**NEW DELHI:** The Reserve Bank of India's new auto-debit rule on Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA), has been made applicable from October 1. With the UPI Auto-Pay facility, customers can use any UPI application for recurring payments such as electricity bills, EMI payments, insurance, mobile bills, mutual funds, among others, upto Rs 5000.

As per details shared by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), here>s a step-by-step guide on how to setup BHIM UPI Auto-Pay facility to make recurring payments:

Any UPI-enabled application will have a 'mandate' section, through which customers can create, modify, pause and revoke the auto-debit mandate. The mandate section will allow customers to view their past mandates. UPI users can create e-mandate through the the account through UPI PIN UPI ID, QR scan, or intent. one-time and the subsequent mandate is created according ited automatically. AGENCIES

**OFFERS** to customers> spends on recurring payments. The mandates can be set for one-time, daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, halfyearly, and yearly.

The mandates are generated instantly and payments get deducted automatically on the authorized date. Customers have to authenticate monthly payments will

### PNB lowers interest rates on loans against SGB, jewellery

THE COUNTRY'S SECOND-LARGEST PUBLIC SECTOR BANK ALSO SLASHED THE MARGIN ON HOME LOANS. **CUSTOMERS SEEKING HOME** LOANS CAN NOW AVAIL OF LOANS UP TO 80 PER CENT OF THE PROPERTY'S VALUE WITHOUT ANY UPPER **CEILING ON THE LOAN AMOUNT** 

**NEWDELHI:** Punjab National Bank lowered its interests rates on loans against gold jewellery and Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) by 145 basis points, as part new range of offers for customers amid the festive season. The public-sector lender will now offer loans against sovereign gold bonds at 7.20 per cent and oans against gold jewellery at 7.30 per cent, according to news agency.

Punjab National Bank has also reduced the home loan rate, which now starts from 6.60 per cent, while customers can avail car loans starting from 7.15 per cent and personal loans from 8.95 per cent. The bank is also

offering a full waiver of service charges or processing fees on the loans against gold jewellery and SGB - similar to home loans and vehicle loans announced recently.

The country's second-largest public sector bank also slashed the margin on home loans. Customers seeking home loans can now avail of loans up to 80 per cent of the property's value without any upper ceiling on the loan amount, according to Punjab National Bank's home loan offer. On Wednesday, October 13, shares of Punjab National Bank settled 0.48 per cent higher at Rs 41.45 on the BSE. Punjab National Bank opened on the BSE at Rs 41.40, touching an intra day high of Rs 42.05 and an intra day low of Rs 41.30 throughout the trading session.

India- the country's largest lender, also reduced home loan interest rates to 6.7 per cent in its special festive season offer, for customers seeking affordable loans. The bank's home loans consist of low interest charges, zero processing charges and is a credit score linked home loan. AGENCIES

Meanwhile, State Bank of

# At \$22.6 billion in Sept, trade deficit widens to highest level in 14 years

**NEW DELHI:** The country's merchandise trade deficit the gap between imports and exports, widened to a record \$22.6 billion in September 2021 - the highest level in at least 14 vears, according to news agency Reuters.

The country's overall exports (merchandise and services) rose 21.44 per cent to \$54.06 billion in September from \$44.52 billion in the corresponding month last year, while overall imports grew 70 per cent to \$68.49 billion from \$40.29 in the year-ago period, according to government data released on Thursday.



Merchandise exports rose month from \$27.56 in the same

22.60 per cent to \$33.79 last month last year, while merchan-

dise imports grew 84.76 per cent over the corresponding period to \$56.39 billion from \$30.52 in last year, and a growth of 18.30the year-ago period, according to data by the commerce industry today. The purchases of crude oil and gold pushed imports to record-high levels last month. The data for the services sector released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is for August 2021, so the trade data for September 2021 is an estimation. It will be revised based on the RBI's subsequent release, said the commerce ministry.

The overall exports in the April-September period is estimated at \$312.47 billion, marking a growth of 40.52 per cent

September period in 2019 (pre-Covid era). In terms of exports, the major groups of commodities exhibiting growth in September 2021 are coffee, cashew, petroleum products, cotton/yard. handloom products, engineering goods, among others. Whereas, the major groups

per cent compared to the April-

of commodities exhibiting degrowth in September include iron ore, oil meals, oil seeds, tobacco, ceramic products and glassware, spices, meat, dairy and poultry products, drugs and pharmaceuticals. AGENCIES

than we had seen in any other

year in history. Data breaches

have also accelerated, so there's

a lot more personal information

out there that criminals can take

Unlike simple email-based

scams of the past purporting

to be from princes or oil bar-

ons seeking your help to shift

their millions, the modern bank

scam can be sophisticated,

multi-phased and extremely

advantage of.

# Welcome to Britain, the bank scam capital of the world

offering a discount on an electric toothbrush that began the sequence of events that ruined

Within minutes of entering her card details, she got a call from her bank telling her fraudulent transactions were being made. The next day Robert Clayton from Britain's Financial Conduct Authority called to say they were pursuing the criminals responsible but that her savings were at risk.

There was no toothbrush, though. No fraud department, no Robert Clayton. They were all part of a scam to gradually siphon off Anna's life savings, and within a few weeks the plot had succeeded, to the tune of about 2,00,000 pounds (\$270,000). "I am still in shock, the guilt

**LONDON**: It was an email and shame are impossible to convey," said the 78-year-old widow from central England, who did not want her full name to be used in this story.

She is one of thousands of people who have seen savings swept away this year by an unprecedented wave of online bank fraud hitting Britain, where you're more likely to be a victim of online fraud than any other crime

The country is the global epicentre for such attacks, according to five of the biggest British banks and more than a dozen security experts who said scammers were buying up batches of consumers' personal details on the dark net to target the record numbers shopping and banking online since the pandemic.



The country's super-fast payments infrastructure, relatively light policing of fraud-related crime, plus its use of the world's most widely used language Eng-

lish, also made it an ideal global test bed for scams, the banks and specialists added.

A British record of 754 million pounds (\$1 billion) was stolen in the first six months have seen more fraud attacks of this year, up 30% from the same period in 2020, according to data from banking industry body UK Finance, and up more than 60% from 2017, when it began compiling the figures.

That represents a per capita fraud rate roughly triple that seen in the United States in 2020, according to a Reuters calculation from UK Finance and the latest available Federal Trade Commission data.

The most sophisticated fraud tends to start in the UK, and then move two years later to the US and then around the world," said Ayelet Biger-Levin, vice president of product strategy at US-based cybersecurity firm BioCatch, which provides anti-fraud technology to banks.

"In the last 12 months we

"We've seen some cases where the fraudster has been talking to somebody for three or four years as someone else before they actually scam them out of a large amount of money," said Brian Dilley, group director for economic crime prevention at Britain's biggest bank

**AGENCIES** 

#### **Retail inflation falls** sharply to 4.35 pc in September on decline in food prices

NEW DELHI: Retail inflation fell sharply to 4.35 per cent in September 2021 from 5.30 per cent in August 2021, mainly due to a major slide in food prices which came down to below one per cent levels to settle at 0.68 per cent in September - a free fall from 3.11 per cent levels seen in August 2021

The noticeable slide in retail inflation in September 2021 was orchestrated by fall in prices of food items like eggs, meat & fish, fruits and vegetables.

The fall is all the more remarkable if compared to the September 2020 levels, when retail inflation as per Consumer Price Index (CPI) had sky rocketed to 7.27 per cent while food inflation went beyond the 10 per cent mark to reach 10.68 per cent. This was the third consecutive month when CPI based inflation stayed below the 6 per cent mark. It was 5.59 per cent in July 2021 and 5.30 per cent in August 2021.

The fall in September retail inflation figures are in sharp contrast to May 2021, when it had touched 6.30 per cent, mainly due to supply chain disruptions owing to the second wave of the Coronavirus pandemic.

In June 2021, retail inflation was 6.26 per cent level.

Food inflation levels however have hit rock bottom levels in September as they went even below the 1 per cent mark, compared to 3.11 per cent in August 2021 and 3.96 per cent in July 2021.

Egg prices fell to 172.8 in September 2021 from 177.3 in August 2021, fruits too fell sharply to 156.8 in September from 161 in August 2021.

Similarly vegetables too came down to 162.2 September from 164.8 in August. Meat & fish fell from 204.4 in August to 204 in September 2021. AGENCIES

# Indian Rupee may touch 74-mark against US Dollar by end of Dec

**NEWDELHI:** A potential gush of foreign inflows on the back of a slew of large share sales is likely to bring reprieve to the Indian rupee, pummeled by rising oil prices.

The currency, which has become emerging Asia's worst performer over the past month, may gain about 2% from Wednesday's close to 74 per dollar by the end of December, according to a Bloomberg survey. Big inflows may make way for Indian shores as digital companies, including Warren Buffet-backed Paytm, plan to raise about \$10 billion in initial share sales.

The rupee has come under pressure as surging commodity prices rekindled worries about inflation and the financial health of the net oil-importing nation. A stronger dollar, spurred by rising wagers of U.S. stimulus taper, has also weighed on emerging-market currencies.

"Historically, when crude was boiling, equities were sluggish, and money was not coming in, so everything turned negative



for the rupee," said Sajal Gupta, head of foreign-exchange and rates trading at Edelweiss Securities Pvt. But this time, "the slate of IPOs should substantially cushion the impact of high crude prices.

Traders have been surprised

by the RBI's soft intervention to arrest the currency's losses. The rupee has declined by 3% since early September, and India Forex Advisors Pvt. says the RBI may have allowed losses intending to correct the rupee's

That's why the RBI "has not intervened too aggressively by selling dollars," said Abhishek Goenka, Chief Executive Officer at India Forex Advisors. The RBI may allow the rupee to trade in a wider range of 73.90-76.90 per dollar in the current fiscal year,

he said. Higher oil prices and fast recovering local demand have boosted imports, widening India's trade deficit to an all-time high in September. Oil imports surged by about 200%.

India got \$100 million worth of foreign inflows into stocks so far in October, among the highest in Asia, after receiving \$445.8 million in the quarter ended September, data compiled by Bloomberg show. Besides. Paytm, the country's leader in digital payments, Flipkart, the Indian e-commerce giant controlled by Walmart Inc., is also aiming for an IPO as soon as the fourth quarter.

"Inflows will remain supportive of the rupee, especially amid vibrant IPOs," said Dhiraj Nim, a foreign exchange strategist at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. "The key driver could be the RBI's policy. Assuming inflows sustain, the RBI will have to pare FX purchases, simultaneous to its management of surplus domestic liquidity."AGENCIES

# Energy prices should retreat by early 2022: IMF Chief **Economist Gita Gopinath**

**NEW DELHI:** Rising energy orices are weighing on households but the recent spike is unlikely to fuel a 1970s-style oil crisis and should retreat early next year, IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath told AFP. Energy prices collapsed last year amid the shutdowns imposed to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, but 2021 has brought a sharp rebound in demand as the global economy recovered, Gopinath said.

In the energy market, a long, cold winter followed by a particularly hot summer led to greater demand and depleted stocks, especially gas reserves in Europe.

"This recovery is really quite unique," she said, speaking on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World

Supplies of many other goods have not been able to rebound as quickly as demand, hampered in part by the spread of the Delta variant of Covid-19, which has made workers reluctant to return to

their jobs and snarled supply chains.

Those labor shortages are 'feeding into price pressures" in countries such as Germany, the United States and Japan, she said.

"We are in a difficult situation where we've seen prices go up very sharply," and the ey question is whether that will persist, she said.

While energy prices "will be elevated" for the next couple of months, "We expect that to come back down by the end of the first quarter next year and into the second quarter," she **AGENCIES** 

# Global debt touched new high of \$226 trillion in 2021: IMF

**NEW DELHI:** Due to COV ID-19 and policies put in place to respond to it, the global debt has jumped to a new high of \$226 trillion with India's dues projected to rise to 90.6 per cent in 2021, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said.

Advanced economies and

China contributed more than 90 per cent to the accumulation of world-wide debt in 2020. The remaining emerging economies and low-income developing countries contributed only around seven per cent. "Because of COVID-19 and policies put in place to respond to it, debt levels increased fast and reached high levels. High



and rising levels of public and private debt are associated with during a release of the 2021 Fiscal Monitor Report.

risks to financial stability and public finances," IMF Director of Fiscal Affairs Department Vitor Gaspar told reporters

scal Monitor Report. particularly severe for poorer gradual reduction in the primary "The debt of governments," countries, Mr Gasper said. deficit, he said. **AGENCIES** 

households and non-financial corporations added up to \$226 trillion in 2020 – \$27 trillion above 2019. This increase is, by far, the largest on record,' he said. This figure includes both public and non-financial In its 2021 Fiscal Monitor

report, the IMF said India's debt increased from 68.9 per cent of its GDP in 2016 to 89.6 per cent in 2020. It is projected to jump to 90.6 per cent in 2021 and then decline to 88.8 per cent in 2022, to gradually reach 85.2 per cent in 2026. Constraints on financing are

private sector debt.

Noting that in 2020, fiscal policy proved its worth, he said the increase in public debt, in 2020, was fully justified by the need to respond to COVID-19 and its economic, social and financial consequences. But the increase is expected to be one-off, he said. He said debt is expected to decline this year and next - by about 1 percentage point of GDP per year. After that, it is projected to

stabilise at about 97 per cent of GDP. These debt dynamics are driven by a strong contribution from nominal GDP growth, accompanied by a much more

# Informal sector hit hardest by Covid crisis in India: World Bank President

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian economy that was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic is now in recovery mode and the World Bank welcomes that, its president David Malpass said on. Malpass also said that India, which faces huge challenges of integrating more people into the formal sector economy and raising the earnings of the people, has made some progress but that's not enough.

"Indians were hard hit by the waves of COVID and that's unfortunate. They responded with the huge production of vaccines and there's been progress on the vaccination effort. But we have to recognise the hit that COVID caused on the Indian economy and especially on the informal sector of the Indian economy which is large," Malpass told

Last week, the World Bank projected the Indian economy to grow at 8.3 per cent this year.



He also said India, like other nations, is now facing a supply chain disruption due to the COVID-19. "The Indian economy is recovering, and we welcome that. It's going through to the other side of the COVID of ...the, the latest wave. That's good. But India, like other countries, is hit hard now by the supply chain disruptions and by the inflation that's been rising in the world," Malpass

"I"m giving the general mixed view that there's progress, but not enough. India faces huge challenges of integrating more people into their economy into the formal sector economy and raising the earnings of people," he said. The Indian government, he said, is focused on that.

Malpass said he went to In-

dia in late 2019 and saw the changes that were being made that were quite positive in terms of the banking system, the financial system, the civil service system, and ways that India was looking for ways to improve the clean water situation which is very important in India for child nutrition for improving nutrition. Clean water is one of the most important starting points for life, he said. "I"ve mentioned that this is a huge, giant challenge for the world's biggest democracy," Malpass said. AGENCIES

### October power supply deficit in India worst since March 2016: Report



**NEW DELHI**: The power supply in India fell about 750 million units short of demand during the first 12 days of October, largely due to a coal shortage, a deficit of 1.6 per cent that was the worst since March 2016, data from grid regulator POSOCO showed. The October shortfall was already the biggest in absolute terms for a single month since November 2018, even with 19 days of October still left.

Northern states such as Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, and the eastern states of Jharkhand and Bihar, were the worst affected, registering supply deficits of 2.3 per cent-14.7 per cent. Increased economic activity after the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic has driven up demand for coal, leading

to a supply shortage, forcing northern states such as Bihar, Rajasthan and Jharkhand to DARKNESS cut power for up to 14 hours

The government has asked power producers to import up to 10 per cent of their coal needs to blend with domestic coal and has warned states of electricity supply curbs if they are found selling on power exchanges to cash in on surging prices. India's dependence on coal-fired power quidity flow from this month, increased to 69.6 per cent in October from 66.5 per cent in September, the data showed, exacerbating the coal shortage amid a decline in output from other sources such as wind and

More than 60 per cent of the plants have fuel stocks of less stated targets as a first step than three days.

# RBI likely to hike rates from first quarter of 2022: Report

**DEMAND REMAINS** STRONG IN INDIA, BUT THERE ARE SUPPLY-**SIDE HEADWINDS IN AREAS LIKE CHIPS** WHICH IS BOTHERING THE AUTO SECTOR AND COAL SHORTAGES WHICH THREATENS TO PUT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY INTO

**NEW DELHI:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may change its monetary policy stance and increase lending rates from the first quarter of 2022, Japanese brokerage firm Nomura said.

The apex bank will begin moving towards normal liit said, adding that this will narrow down the gap between the rate at which it funds the system and the rate at which it absorbs excess cash flow, in December.

A section of experts have seen RBI's move to narrow country's 135 coal-fired power down excess liquidity through **AGENCIES** towards normalising its policy



stance, which has been quite accommodative since last year, to soak in the pressures created due to the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, the report by the brokerage firm noted.

Nomura hiked its consumer price index inflation target for 2022 to 5.2 per cent from 5 per cent earlier.

Demand remains strong in India, but there are supplyside headwinds in areas like auto sector and coal shortages which threatens to put parts of the country into darkness, it said.

There has been an acute shortage of coal in the country and the power companies are facing the prospects of importing coal at high costs and with power demand expected to rise in the coming days due to the festival season, supply side constraints could lead to downside risk to growth chips which is bothering the momentum, Nomura warned

# Important for India to focus on green investment post-pandemic: IMF

WASHINGTON: As the Indian economy recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic that hit it hard, it is important for the country to focus on public investment, particularly in green sectors, the International Monetary Fund said.

"As we move towards the recovery, it is also important to focus on public investment, particularly on green investment, so that the recovery can be inclusive and green," IMF"s Fiscal Affairs Department Deputy Director Paolo Mauro told reporters during a news confer-

ence in Washington. He said India's debt is at the ratio of about 90 per cent, and it is important to give a signal that there is a medium-term fiscal framework in place that ensures investors that the debt ratio will decline in the medium term. Responding to a ques-



tion, Mauro said the situation is improving when it comes to the epidemic. It is very different from a few months ago, he said, adding, fortunately, the number of cases is declining and the vaccination is becoming more widespread.

On the economic front, therefore, even though the situation is improving, the priority remains to address the health emergency. It remains to pro-

vide ample support, particularly to the poorer segments of the population through social protection, employment benefits, and so on," Mauro said. "In terms of more recent

reforms, one that I would like to highlight is the National Asset Reconstruction Company, the so-called bad bank. This is potentially very promising because it is important to tackle non-performing loans," he said. This has been a longstanding drag on credit, and potentially this is very promising, he added.

"It is very important that both the governance and the independence of such so-called bad banks be in place so that the costs to public finances can be kept under control and one can go back to promoting inclusive growth," Mauro

# India looks at close to double digit growth this year, says Nirmala Sitharaman

**BOSTON:** India is looking any assessment as yet about the don't think you can have one at near close to double-digit growth this year and the country will be one of the fastestgrowing economies, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said.

The Minister also emphasised that she expects the economic growth next year to be in the range of 7.5-8.5%, which will be sustained for the next decade.

"As regards the growth of India, we are looking at near close to double-digit growth this year and this would be the highest in the world. And for the next year, on the basis of this year, (the) growth would definitely be somewhere in the range of eight (%)," Sitharaman said here during a conversation

at Harvard Kennedy School. She noted that while the Ministry of Finance has not done

growth number, but the World Bank, IMF and rating agencies have all come nearer to this kind of growth number for India. So, the next year would also

be somewhere in the range of eight to nine (%), 7.5 to 8.5 (%) would be the growth. And I expect that to be sustained for the global economy". the next decade because of the rate at which expansion in core industries is happening, the rate at which services are growing, I don't see a reason for India to be any way lesser than" in the

next coming decades, she said. During the conversation with Professor at Harvard University Lawrence Summers during the talk organised by the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government, Sitharaman, when asked about the state of the global economy, said: "I growth rates.

picture for the entire globe. The emerging market economies are likely to recover speedily and are likely to have a growth trajectory, which will probably be even the title of engine for growth. They are the ones who are going to be pulling forward

"And in that, at least from the data which has been released vesterday and the week before. I can say that India's growth this year will be the highest in the world, of course, based on a lower base of last year, but that will continue into the next year. And even there, we will be one of the fastest-growing economies,"

She added that some other countries in the emerging market areas will also record high

she noted.

"The developed world will also catch up ... because their base is very high. So, the growth that they can show off will not be closer to double-digit but certainly will be also adding to the global growth," she said, adding that she sees "different picture in different regions".

When asked about the sustained growth of 8%, a historical rarity, her medium and long term vision of where that growth is going to come from, Sitharaman underlined that she does not think the growth of any country post-pandemic can be compared with what had happened earlier, prior to the pandemic.

The reset which the globe has seen itself tells you a narrative that the way in which countries are going to plan their growth is going to be

very different from what it

was earlier," she said. She noted that the COV-ID-19 pandemic itself is one of the reasons for the reset, which is "happening from certain geographical territories where looking for other places where out and they are looking for

they can run their businesses from because no longer you have the transparency and rule of law in certain geographical

territories" Therefore, the industry is the first one to get out. Investpeople are coming out of it, ments are the first ones to get

destinations where certain assumptions can be taken up - rule of law, democracy, transparent policies and assurance that you're with a broad global frame of things and that you are not an outlier, that you will not have anything to do with the global scheme of things, and it's no good for us.'

The Minister said all these are extraneous factors that helped India to attract industries to set businesses there. She also pointed out that India itself is a huge market.

"Today, our demographic dividend is not a dividend without reason. It's a dividend. which has great purchasing ower ability. The middle class in India has the money to buy things," she said, adding that the people who are moving from other destinations to in-

vest in India and to produce in India will have a captive market.

"The same demographic dividend also gives us another advantage - the youth population of India today is a skilled set of voungsters skilled in various different areas, most of them in STEM," the Minister noted.

Sitharaman said India will attract investments and have the purchasing power to demand the best of things from whoever produces it.

India is even today best in agriculture. "The food security of many countries depend on imported food. Many in the Middle East depend on India for their basic food materials. We will be one of the largest exporters of food and food processed materials," **AGENCIES** she added.

RYAN receives money order; speaks with parents Shah Rukh, Gauri Khan

via video call

ollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan received a money order worth Rs 4,500 from his home to order food and other items from the canteen at Mumbai's Arthur This is the maximum amount of money

allowed that can be sent to someone Aryan was also allowed a brief video

call with his family.

Aryan is said to have spoke with his father Shah Rukh Khan and mother Gauri Khan via video call from inside Mumbai's Arthur Road Jail.

The Bombay High Court order stated that prisoners must be allowed to talk to their families once a week.

Aryan Khan and five others arrested in from a cruise ship off the Mumbai a drug seizure case have been now shifted coast, will have to remain in jail for to general barracks of the Arthur Road at least six more days, as a special prison here as their quarantine period court earlier in the day posted his was over, an official said on Thursday. and two others' bail pleas for orders

Aryan (23), arrested by the Narcotics on October 20. Control Bureau (NCB) on October 3

They had been shifted to the

Arthur Road prison in central Mumbai after their initial custodial remand with the NCB got over and a magistrate sent them in judicial custody but denied them bail.

Based on a tip-off that a rave party was scheduled on the ship,

an NCB team raided the Goabound Cordelia cruise on October 2 evening and allegedly seized drugs. Several persons including Aryan Khan, Arbaaz Merchant and Munmun Dhamecha were

**POTPOURRI** 



**Anushka** shares a picture with VAMIKA

Ashtami

Sharma recently picture with daughter Vamika on the occasion of Ashtami. In the picture, the actress is seen holding her daughter as she smiles ear to ear. We catch a glimpse of the little munchkin in a pink top. Sharing the picture, Anushka wrote, "Making me braver and more courageous every day. May you always find the strength of the

Vamika... Priyanka Chopra was all love for her

Dil Dhadakne Do co-star as she dropped a heart emoji. Tahira Kashyap wrote, "So precious..." Ranveer Singh was in awe of Vamika as he wrote, "Oh-Lay", Genelia D'souza was also all love for Anushka and her daughter. Fans were also going gaga over the cute click as they showered a lot of love on the motherdaughter duo in the comments. "Cutest Picture", "Love this... one day!", "Omg..I am crying", "Okay but this is so cute" and more goddess in you my little such fans comments filled the Anushka's

# Hardik Pandya celebrated his birthday with his 'best friend'



MUMBAI: It was team Inbirthday. As the cricketer Men's T20 World Cup 2021 sure to celebrate his birthday with his 'best friend'.

all-rounder Hardik Pandya's cricket team for their ICC turned a year older, he made campaign, took to his official Twitter account to upload a happiness, and peace to you picture with his son. As he always".

thanked he friends and fans for the wishes, he wrote, "Celebrating a new year of life with my best friend. Thank you for your wishes everyone." Hardik's birthday celebra-

tion was a thing of love. He enjoyed the day with his wife Natasa and son Agastya. Here is a glimpse of his birthday special day for you.

Even Natasa made a video with their pictures together to wish her 'whole world' on his special day. Sharing it on Instagram, she captioned it, "Happy bday my bebu. you are my whole world, my everything. Forever grateful for you. Agastya and i are blessed to have you by our side. you are simply the best. to the moon and back @hardikpandya93."

Although Mumbai Indians did not qualify for the IPL 2021 Playoffs, Hardik Pandya along with other cricketers is currently in the UAE for the upcoming T20 World Cup. On Hardik Pandya's birthday, cricketers like Virat Kohli, Ishan Kishan, and others wished Pandya, who is in the UAE the 28-year-old champion allrounder. Virat Kohli shared a picture of himself with Pandya and wrote, "Happy birthday Hardik Pandya! good health, **AGENCIES** 

# At 7 feet 7 inches, 24-year-old Rumeysa Gelgim from Turkey named world's tallest living woman

CHANDIGARH: 24-year-old Turkey's Rumeysa Gelgim has been named as the tallest living woman by Guinness World Records with a height of 7 feet and 0.7 inches.

Rumeysa was re-measured this year, after she was first awarded the title for the tallest teenager living (female) back in 2014, when she was aged 18, as per guinnessworldrecords.com.

Rumeysa tall stature is a condition called Weaver syndrome. This is an extremely rare condition that causes accelerated growth amongst other abnormalities, including skeletal maturation, as per Guinness World Records The condition means that Rumeysa uses a wheelchair most of the time, but can move for short periods using a walker.

Ever since her first record in 2014, Rumeysa has felt it was important to use her platform to educate others about rare medical conditions such as her own.

they pass her on the street, but most people are kind and supportive when they meet her for the first time.

In her free time Rumeysa



likes to go out for nice meals record holders are now from with her family and finds the same country - a rare ocswimming really helps her to relax. Her family are very happy and proud of her for She says that her height having the Guinness World ers shared the same national-

> that Rumeysa is from Turkey, 8.95 in) and Yao Defen (233.3 as alongside Sultan Kösen cm; 7 ft 7 in) held the talltallest living male and female respectively.

currence in Guinness World Records history.

The last time the two hold-It's particularly fascinating Bao Xi Shun (236.1 cm; 7 ft (251 cm; 8 ft 2.8 in), both the est male and female records

ond day of a passenger's arrival

in the UK."Testing, along with

vaccines, remains one of our

first lines of defence against

COVID-19. Getting a test as

early as possible on arrival and

isolation when necessary, can

help control the spread of the

virus and protect one another,

said Dr Jenny Harries, Chief

Executive of the UK Health

Security Agency (UKHSA).

**AGENCIES** 

### Salman Khan to now launch his NFT collection

**MUMBAI**: On his birthday, megastar Amitabh Bachchan launched his non-fungible token (NFT) collection on Fatico, a platform that focuses on creating assets in the field of cinema, music, art and sport curated with the help

Now, following in the footsteps of Big B, superstar Salman Khan too has decided to go the NFT way. The actor soon plans to launch his NFT collection and he made the announcement on his Instagram. He has selected BollyCoin

Sharing three of his different looks in pictures, the actor wrote, ": "Aa raha hoon main, NFTs leke. Salman Khan Static NFTs coming on @bollycoin. Stay tuned, bhai log! www.bollycoin.com#BollyCoin

#NFTs #ComingSoon." BollyCoin, as the name suggest is Bollywood-themed NFT that was started by filmmaker-actor Atul Agnihotri. Through NFTs, art or cinema lovers and fans can own exquisite collectibles of their favourite stars. So, now, fans can invest in pictures and video clips, dialogues, posters, unseen footage, social media content and even merchandise from the film personalities.



Salman took to Instagram where he made the announcement of the launch of his own collection of NFTs that will be available on BollyCoin.

with prominent production houses, such as Salman Khan Films, Arbaaz Khan Productions, Sohail Khan Productions and Reel Life Productions. Going by the website of BollyCoin, it states that the presale

and auction will go live from October 2021. AGENCIES

37 dead, over 70 injured as blast

# **Dinesh Karthik reprimanded for** breaching IPL code of conduct



SHARJAH: Kolkata Knight Riders wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik has been reprimanded for breaching the Indian Premier League's code of conduct during his team's second Qualifier against Delhi Capitals, which it won by three wickets here.

The exact nature of the breach was not specified by the IPL but Karthik was seen dislodging a stump out of frustration after he was dismissed during the high-voltage game on Wednesday

Karthik, on his part, admitted to a level one offence and

also accepted the sanction. "Dinesh Karthik, the Kolkata Knight Riders wicket(IPL's Code of Conduct during his team's Qualifier 2 against Delhi Capitals at Sharjah, 13th October," a statement issued by the IPL stated Karthik admitted to the

Level 1 offence 2.2 of the IPL's Code of Conduct and accepted the sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding,

Rahul Tripathi smashed a six off the penultimate ball of the match as Kolkata Knight Riders beat Delhi Capitals by three wickets in the second IPL qualifier here to set up a title clash against Chennai keeper-batsman, has been Super Kings.

# UK to allow cheaper COVID-19 tests for returning vaccinated travellers

**LONDON**: Fully vaccinated travellers returning to England from countries not on the travel ban red list can take a COVID- 19 negative Lateral Flow Test (LFT) instead of the more expensive Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test under new rules effective from October 24.Travellers vaccinated in over 100 countries and territories, including India, will also be treated the same as returning fully vaccinated UK residents, the government said.

These eligible fully vaccinated passengers arriving in England from countries not on the red list can take an LFT on or before day two of their arrival from October 24, rather than PCR tests. The LFTs can be booked from October 22 and are largely aimed at families planning a break during the upcoming school holidays at the end of this month."We want to make going abroad easier and cheaper, whether you're travelling for work or visiting friends and family, said UK Health Secretary Sajid Javid.

"Lateral Flow Tests will be available later this month for those returning from half term holidays. This change to testing is only possible thanks to the incredible progress of our vaccination programme, which means we can safely open up travel as we learn to live with the virus," he said.Travellers will be able to order cheaper



viders as an alternative to a PCR, offering faster results.

The list of approved private providers will go live on GOV. UK later this month. Passengers will need to take a photo of their LFT and booking reference supplied by the private provider and send it back to them to verify the result.

'Today's rule changes will make testing on arrival simpler and cheaper for people across the country who are

breaks for this October half term," said UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps."Taking away expensive mandatory PCR testing will boost the travel industry and is a major step forward in normalising international travel and encouraging people to book holidays with confidence," he said. Those that have already bought a PCR do not need to

Under the rules, an arrival

buy another test.

# hits Shia mosque in Afghanistan's Kandahar during Friday prayers



KABUL: A large explosion tore through a Shi'ite mosque in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar during Friday prayers, killing at least 37 people and wounding more than 70, officials said, the second massive attack in a week targeting worshippers from the minority sect. A local reporter in Kandahar told Reuters that eyewitnesses had described three suicide attackers, one of whom blew himself up at the entrance to the mosque with the two others detonating their devices inside the building."The situation is very bad. Mirwais hospital is messaging and calling on young people to give blood," he said, referring to a local hospital where dead and injured had been taken.

Photographs and mobile phone footage posted by journalists on social media showed many people apparently dead or seriously wounded on the bloody floor of the Imam Bargah mosque. A hospital official gave figures of 37 dead and more than 70 wounded and said the final total could be higher. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. Interior ministry spokesman Qari Saeed Khosti of the ruling Taliban movement said authorities

were collecting details. The blast took place just days after an attack claimed by Islamic State militants, which killed scores of Shi'ite worshippers at a mosque in the northern city of Kunduz. The full death toll from that attack has been estimated as high as 80. Sunni Muslim fighters of Islamic State have repeatedly targeted Shi'ites in the past. The Taliban are also strict Sunni Muslims but have pledged to protect all ethnic and sectarian groups since sweeping into power in August as U.S. forces withdrew. **AGENCIES**