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Yogi takes oath as UP CM for second time; Maurya, Pathak as Deputy CMs

NEW DELHI: Yogi Adityanath on Friday took oath as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister for the second term at a mega ceremony attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top BJP leaders, including Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and JP Nadda. Chief Ministers of party ruled states and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar were also present on the occasion. Yogi was sworn in along with 52 ministers, including Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brijesh Pathak as Deputy CMs, all hand-picked by Modi and Shah keeping in mind regional and caste equations and giving representation to all sections.



The Yogi 2.0 council has 16 Cabinet ministers, 14 ministers of state with independent charge and 20 ministers of state. There are 31 new faces in the government. Twenty-four ministers from the first term have been dropped.

While the party has retained top OBC leader Keshav Prasad Maurya despite him losing his seat, several big names, including Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma and cabinet ministers Shrikant Sharma and Sidharth Nath Singh, were dropped.

Shrikant Sharma's name is, however, doing the rounds for the post of UP state president. The buzz is that after party president JP Nadda completes his term, some names from UP may figure in the

organisation headed by the new chief. PM's close confidante and former bureaucrat AK Sharma has also made it as the UP Cabinet. The inclusion of AK Sharma, an MLC, is an acknowledgement of his handling of the second wave of Covid-19 in Varanasi/Purvanchal region.

Among the new ministers are former Uttarakhnd Governor Baby Rani Maurya and Jitin Prasad, Brahmin leader who quit the Congress last year. Former police officer Aseem Arun and Kalyan Singh's grandson Sandeep Singh have been included as ministers of state (independent charge). Those dropped include Mohsin Raza, Ram Naresh Agnihotri, Ashok Kataria, Jai Prakash Nishad, Ramapati Shastri, Neelkanth Tiwari and Ashutosh Tandon. **AGENCIES**

United Sikhs' volunteers support Ukraine war refugees



NEW DELHI: United Sikhs, the United Nations affiliated human rights and advocacy organisation, has started relief work and humanitarian aid in Ukraine for more than three weeks, serving the emergency needs of refugees escaping the war. United Sikhs is the only organisation of the Sikhs that has reached ground zero in the war-torn Ukraine and its neighbouring country Poland serving the Ukrainian refugees, selflessly, ignoring the danger of war when two nations Russia and Ukraine are locked in a severe war, leading to huge loss to men, material and properties.

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Sikhs' humanitarian mission till date and the relief work is continuing.

Its teams have been serving hot meals, sanitation kits, water, clothing, other goods of daily needs and even toys for the newborn.

A team of volunteers drove for 36 hours with a commercial van full of supplies from the UK to reach the base camp last week, delivering power generators, water pumps, blankets, quilts, sleeping bags, sanitary pads, tents, stoves and utensils, etc.

The organisation is also providing heated shelters at the Ukraine border, serving hot meals and rescuing families from Lviv.

United Sikhs is also collaborating with Polish Red Cross Polski Czerwony Krzyz to provide medical assistance to the refugees escaping Ukraine. **AGENCIES**

Punjab Ex-MLAs to get pension for one term only: CM Mann



FW BUREAU
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday said former MLAs will now get pension for only one term, doing away with the practice of drawing the benefit for each term served by them. "Ex-MLAs in Punjab, even if they have won twice, five times or ten times, they will now get pension for one term only," said Mann in a video message while adding that several MPs are also getting pension for remaining MLAs earlier.

Punjab CM said money saved from it will be spent on the welfare of people. "Our political leaders, including MLAs, seek votes from you with folded hands by saying that give us a chance to serve you," Mann said addressing people.

But you will be surprised to know that several MLAs who won thrice, four times or five times and then after losing the elections or after not getting tickets for contesting the polls, get lakhs of rupees in pension per month, Mann said.

Corporate tax reduction helped economy: Finance Minister

TO SUSTAIN HIGH GROWTH RATE, THE CENTRE HAS EARMARKED A MASSIVE BUDGETARY OUTLAY OF RS 7.50 LAKH CRORE FOR FY23

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said that corporate tax reduction has helped the economy. Replying to the debate on the Finance Bill, the minister told the Lok Sabha that corporate tax collections stood at Rs 7.3 lakh crore so far this fiscal.

Besides, Sitharaman pointed out that the Central government did not increase taxes last year or this year.

She cited that 32 countries like Germany, France, Canada, UK among others increased taxes.

The Minister said that this budget has not burdened the public but yet put the money where the multiplier would be maximum where infra creation of assets will happen.

To sustain high growth rate, the Centre has earmarked a massive budgetary outlay of



"The Lok Sabha on Friday approved the Finance Bill, thereby completing the budgetary exercise for fiscal year FY23. The Bill was approved in the lower house by a voice vote, after 39 official amendments, moved by Sitharaman, were accepted

Rs 7.50 lakh crore for FY23. Furthermore, she said that tax payers numbers have increased to 9.1 crore from 5 crore a few years ago.

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thereby completing the budgetary exercise for fiscal year FY23. The Bill was approved in the lower house by a voice vote, after 39 official amendments, moved by Sitharaman, were accepted. **AGENCIES**

India-UK conclude second round of talks for Free Trade Agreement



FW BUREAU

On Thursday 17 March 2022, the Republic of India and the United Kingdom concluded the second round of talks for an India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA). A delegation of Indian officials undertook technical talks in London. The negotiations were conducted in a hybrid fashion, with some negotiators in a dedicated UK negotiations facility, and others attending virtually. For this round of negotiations, draft treaty text was shared and discussed across most chapters that will make up the agreement. Technical experts from both sides came together for discussions in 64 separate sessions covering 26 policy areas. The third round of negotiations is due to be hosted by India in April 2022.

Nepal's economy suffers amid surge in energy prices

KATHMANDU: WNePal has failed to import electricity from India as electricity prices in the neighbouring country have been rising lately.

Nepal's most bids for power from the India have failed recently because other buyers outbid the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). On Wednesday, Nepal was forced to cut power to its industries for several hours, Xinhua

news agency reported. "The electricity prices in India have been rising because of growing input costs for thermal power plants to produce electricity amid high fuel prices globally," Suresh Bahadur Bhattarai, the NEA's Spokesman, told Xinhua.

Nepal is facing ripple effects of the current Russia-Ukraine tensions, "as it is being forced to pay higher

prices for electricity than the usual market prices," he added. The NEA, the sole power utility body in Nepal, buys electricity from India in the dry season when Nepali hydropower plants produce insufficient power because of reduced water levels in the rivers.

In Nepal, the peak hour demand for power is around 1,600 megawatts (MW),

while the power plants are producing around 650MW of electricity currently. In the monsoon season, it produces more power than it needs and sells the surplus energy to India. As the NEA is now paying a higher amount for power purchases than it charges customers, Bhattarai fears a financial health of the power utility body. **AGENCIES**

After huge victory in Punjab assembly election, AAP sets eyes on HP

FW BUREAU

After bumper victory in Punjab elections, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is now preparing to move ahead towards Himachal Pradesh for November Assembly polls.

A strong anti-incumbency wave against the state ruling BJP-evident from the loss of three Assembly and one parliamentary seat in the October 2021 by polls-and the absence of the veteran Chief Minister faces may work for the party that is already ruling in two states.

Both the conventional game changers Virbhadra Singh of the Congress and Prem Kumar Dhumal of the BJP are out of the scene. Virbhadra Singh is



no more, while Prem Kumar Dhumal is virtually in political exile after his defeat in the previous Assembly polls.

Himachal Pradesh was traditionally dominated by the Congress and saw its first non-Congress chief minister, Shanta Kumar, in 1977, when

the Janata Party came to the helm.

In current political scenario some rebels from both Congress and BJP have been emerging. Aam Aadmi Party is not active for the first time in the state. "It had contested the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

After big win in Punjab, AAP is hyperactive.

Himachal Pradesh is a small state where the traditional parties have deep roots and the new one is yet to establish its credibility. Former Union minister Sukh Ram was exceptional case, who had to resign as the communications minister in the Narasimha Rao government in 1996 in the wake of a financial scandal, floated the Himachal Vikas Congress (HVC) in the 1998 Assembly polls and won five seats.

In the next Assembly polls, the HVC got one seat and finally merged with the Congress.

In 2017, Sukh Ram and his son Anil Sharma joined

the BJP. The list of politicians switching sides include Vijay Singh Mankotia, who quit the Congress ahead of the Assembly polls in 2007 and joined the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), winning a seat.

Vijay Singh Mankotia, who faced defeat, later joined the Congress. Now, he is looking for a 'credible' third alternative.

In 2014 some rebels from traditional parties opted for AAP to fight all four Lok Sabha seats. The leaders, who joined the AAP, were keen to contest the 2017 Assembly elections, but AAP decided not to enter the fray. In that poll, the BJP won a majority with 44 seats in the 68-member Assembly.

Congress revamps Gujarat organisation, appoints new Secretaries

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Friday appointed three Secretaries to work in Gujarat where elections are due later this year, and removed the current leaders. Umang Singhar, Virender Singh Rathore and B.M. Sandeep have been given the responsibility of assisting Raghu Sharma who is in charge of the state. Ramkishan Ojha has also been drafted for party work in the state.

The Congress is out of power in Gujarat since 1989 and in the last elections, despite coming close, could not dislodge the ruling BJP. The party is preparing to galvanise the state organisation in order to mount a serious challenge. In a recent meet chaired by senior leader Rahul Gandhi, state leaders mentioned the option of poll strategist Prashant Kishor being brought in for strategy. However, there was no decision and the leaders moved on to discuss the organisational issues of the party, a source said. There are said to be back-channels talks going on again after the initial negotiations failed, but the Congress denied it. However, the party has taken on board a close aide of Kishor, to work for the party without any condition, as the joining of the political consultant was stalled by Congress leaders because he wanted a major say in ticket distribution. **AGENCIES**

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

1 BMW India to increase prices from April 2022

2 Mobile phone exports from India to touch \$5.5bn

3 Anil Vij will participate in "Global Investors Growth Summit" to be held in Dubai

SC reserves verdict on plea for enhancing Sidhu's sentence in 1988 road rage case

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday reserved its verdict on a review petition seeking a direction to enhance the sentence of Congress' former Punjab unit chief Navjot Singh Sidhu in the 1988 road rage case, where he was let off with a mere Rs 1,000 fine.

Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, representing Sidhu, submitted before a bench headed by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar that sentence was a discretion of court and no interference, could be done, except in cases of death penalty, given in rarest of the rare cases, and in the present case, there is no need to have a relook at the 2018 judgment. "Appeal on adequacy of sentence should not be entertained. The state is not in appeal against the sentence and the victim cannot challenge the adequacy," he submitted. He further added that there has been no allegation of lack of cooperation on the part of his client. The bench, also comprising Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, noted that the issue before it is only whether despite the court having issued limited notice on point of sentence, the provision under which sentence has been imposed needs to be looked at. **AGENCIES**



ALSO READ | MODERNA TO SEEK FDA APPROVAL FOR VACCINATING KIDS UNDER 6 YEARS * P8 | YOON URGES XI TO COOPERATE CLOSELY FOR N KOREAN DENUCLEARIZATION * P8

PNB acquires 5.97% stake in ONDC in first tranche

ONDC IS AN INITIATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY TO PROMOTE OPEN NETWORKS FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THE EXCHANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES OVER DIGITAL NETWORKS.

NEW DELHI: Lending major Punjab National Bank (PNB) has acquired a 5.97 per cent stake in Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) in the first tranche.

ONDC is an initiative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to promote open networks for all aspects of the exchange of goods and services over digital networks.

It was incorporated on December 30, 2021, with an early investment from the Quality Council of India (QCI) and



HIGHLIGHT

WITH ONDC'S NETWORK-CENTRIC MODEL, BUYERS WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS ALL SERVICES CURRENTLY PROVIDED BY VARIOUS SELLERS ON DIFFERENT PLATFORMS, ON A COMMON NETWORK, THUS MAKING THE NETWORK INTEROPERABLE

Protean eGov Technologies. ONDC is expected to digitise the entire value chain, standardise operations, promote

inclusion of suppliers, derive efficiencies in logistics, and enhance value for consumers for almost all types of businesses.

"In the current platform-centric digital commerce model, buyers and sellers must use the same platform or application to do a business transaction," PNB said in a statement.

"With ONDC's network-centric model, buyers will be able to access all services currently provided by various sellers on different platforms, on a common network, thus making the network interoperable," it added. In its earlier meeting, the board of PNB had approved investing in ONDC with an equity participation of 9.5 per cent.

"Accordingly, the bank has invested Rs 10 crore for acquiring a 5.97 per cent stake of ONDC in its first tranche, as per the directives of its board," the statement said. **AGENCIES**

Committee of Secretaries discuss to give final shape for 5G spectrum auction

NEW DELHI: Committee of Secretaries (CoS) including Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Department of Space, discussed spectrum allocation among various user Ministries/Departments in the context of spectrum needs of emerging technologies/users (5G/IMT) and recommended the spectrum allocation in relevant key bands. Accordingly, Department of Telecommunications sent a reference to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on 13.09.2021, seeking recommendations on auction of spectrum in frequency bands identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT)/5G.

Government has planned to conduct auction of 5G in year 2022. Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) are



conducting 5G trials in Delhi, Mumbai, Jamnagar, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Lucknow, Gurgaon, Gandhinagar, Chandigarh, Pune and Varanasi including urban, semi-urban and rural areas. It is prerogative of TSPs to launch 5G service in different cities as per their business/network plans. This information was given by the Minister of State for Communications, Devusinh Chauhan in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today. **AGENCIES**

Allana Group emerges as one of India's largest exporters of wheat

NEW DELHI: The Allana Group, India's largest exporter of processed food products and agro commodities has been nominated as one of India's largest exporters of wheat.

Catering to the greater need of the essential commodity, the Group ensured seamless facilitation of grains and has exported a total of 1,03,877 tonnes for the period of 2 years from 2019-2021. The group witnessed an exponential rise of 1812.30 per cent in their export, transporting over 1,48,000 tonnes in the period of 2021-22. The feat was lauded by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

In these unprecedented times, the war crisis in Ukraine has led to the unique opportunity to fulfil a massive gap of grain export in the market. The Allana Group has aggressively functioned to connect India with the global supply chain and has aided in restocking the essential food grains across the world. **AGENCIES**

NEWS BRIEFS

Major players join hands for study on sustainable aviation fuel

HYDERABAD: Airport operators Groupe ADP and GMR Airports, together with Airbus, Axens and Safran, on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to conduct a joint study on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and its potential in India. The objective of the study, conducted under the lead and coordination of Groupe ADP and GMR Airports and with the expertise of all partners, is to understand and evaluate the demand, the challenges and opportunities of supply, infrastructure and fuelling, as well as to prepare a business case for SAF production and use in India for all kind of aviation purposes. SAF is a clean substitute for fossil jet fuels. Rather than being refined from petroleum, it is produced from sustainable resources such as waste oils from a biological origin, agri residues, municipal solid wastes, or algae. SAF, produced using the most advanced pathways, can provide carbon dioxide emission reduction of up to 85 per cent across the entire SAF lifecycle. The study will be initiated in the second quarter of 2022 and is expected to be completed within one year. It may be further extended based on the agreement of all the parties involved.

In India, already the 3rd-largest domestic aviation market in the world and with a forecasted yearly growth of about 9 per cent going forward, SAF use will be a key element to achieve the targets of carbon reduction and net zero target of the country by 2070, set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. **AGENCIES**

Natural gas business of PSU upstream companies to turn profitable: ICRA



NEW DELHI: The natural gas business of PSU upstream companies would turn profitable as domestic prices are expected to increase substantially in the next revision, ratings agency ICRA said.

Accordingly, the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine has led to a reduction in offtake of Russian crude and a consequent increase in crude oil and gas prices. The ratings agency noted that increasing oil prices add to the fiscal burden for the country, but it is a positive for upstream oil companies.

"Additionally, domestic gas prices notified at \$2.9 per mmBtu (GCV basis) for H2 FY2022 remain low and accordingly gas production remains a loss-making proposition for most of the Indian upstream producers."

Besides, the agency said that demand for petroleum products in the current fiscal has witnessed some recovery compared to the preceding fiscal but remains lower than the pre-Covid levels. "Elevated crude prices may adversely impact the demand recovery witnessed in the recent months."

"The benchmark Singapore gross refining margin (GRM) has witnessed improvement in the recent months, however, high crude prices and subdued global demand may adversely impact the GRM." **AGENCIES**

Financial impact of climate-related risks to Indian cos estimated at Rs 3,285bn

NEW DELHI: The financial impact of climate-related risks to Indian companies responding to global non-profit environmental disclosure system CDP was estimated at Rs 3,285 billion, with climate-related opportunities cited at Rs 3,000 billion.

CDP India launched its 2021 Annual Disclosure report on Thursday at a virtual event. The report, Disclosure Imperative for a Sustainable India, details the climate action disclosed by 88 Indian companies responding to CDP's climate, water and forests questionnaire in 2021.

CDP's new 2025 strategy, Accelerating the Rate of Change, recognises the urgent need for such climate commitments to be translated into swift, effective action, with increased accountability and transparent climate plans from companies, cities, states and regions alike.

It sets out how CDP will respond to the interlinked crises of catastrophic climate change and an irreversible loss of nature and habitats.

Indeed, this rate of change seems to be accelerating in the Indian market. In 2021, 85 Indian companies disclosed to CDP's Climate Change questionnaire in response to



a request to do so from investors, representing a 27 per cent growth since 2020 when 67 companies responded.

It is evident that Indian companies are becoming increasingly climate conscious, with 64 Indian companies joining the Science-Based Targets initiative in 2021, making India the leader among emerging economies when it comes to committing to making science-based targets for the transition towards a low carbon economy.

The report also showed that 72 companies, representing 85 per cent of all Indian companies responding to CDP, engaged with suppliers at different levels across their value chain on climate related issues, an essential step in addressing Scope 3 emissions. Tech giant Wipro has also become the first Indian company to join CDP's Supply Chain Program as of 2022, representing an exemplary step forward in corporate climate action within the market. These many achievements by Indian companies responding to CDP in 2021 will be celebrated at the annual event, which will feature exclusive sessions engaging corporates on key areas of the transition to a sustainable India.

Prarthana Borah, Director, CDP India, at the report launch said, "This report captures a landmark year for India's climate ambition trajectory, as the regulatory board SEBI introduced mandatory sustainability reporting for the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalization and Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced at COP26 the country's commitment to reach net-zero by 2070." **AGENCIES**

POEM
THE BEAUTY OF THE STOCK MARKET

*Stock Market a place to earn,
But before that, there's a lot to learn.
Money there we need to invest,
We always have to give our best.*

*Stocks we have to buy or sell,
But before picking we have to choose well.
Fundamentals have to be strong,
Or the stock might be wrong.*

*Sensex and NIFTY are the index,
The market is not too complex.
Money is ours and we should take care,
The profit and loss will be ours to bear.*

*As we know Fortune Favours the brave,
Too many returns, we should not crave.
Greed will make us lose all our money,
And we may not be able to buy even a bottle of honey.*

*Carefully we have to pick the stocks,
As it is like building blocks.
Over the years portfolio, we have to make,
A Portfolio that no crash can break.*

*Over the long term, we just have to wait,
Coz if we do so the returns will be great.
Investing is like a blossoming flower,
Compounding's magic will show its power.*



Mobile phone exports from India to touch \$5.5bn



NEW DELHI: Mobile phone exports from India will increase by 75 per cent from \$3.16 billion in 2020-21 to over \$5.5 billion in the current fiscal, a report said on Thursday.

The primary driver of this outstanding performance is the smartphone PLI Scheme launched on April 1, 2020, aimed at shifting GVCs to India and increasing India's share in global exports.

"The unprecedented increase in smartphone exports is a tribute to government-industry partnership under the most trying circumstances. The government led with its vision and trust in the mobile industry. The industry, in turn, has redefined Atmanirbhar Bharat as Make in India for the World. We are just getting started,"

Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman of ICEA, said in a statement.

After an uncertain start in 2020, owing to multiple Covid waves, the industry stabilised operations in 2021 and has delivered results that exceed expectations.

Increase in mobile phone exports also marks an important shift in the export basket which is gradually transforming from primary commodities to more value-added, high-end products driven by technology industries.

The smartphone PLI saw participation from five global companies -- Samsung, Foxconn Hon Hai, Rising Star, Wistron and Pegatron -- and Indian champions, including Lava, Bhagwati (Micromax), Padget Electronics, UTL Neolyncs and Optiemus Electronics.

During a 5-year period, the approved companies under the PLI scheme are expected to lead to total production of over Rs 10.5 lakh crore, of which nearly 60 per cent will be contributed by exports to the tune of Rs 6.5 lakh crore.

It is also expected that during this period, nearly 8 lakh new jobs (2 lakh direct and 6 lakh indirect jobs) will be created in the country. **AGENCIES**

Prices of edible oils have shot up across the world: Piyush Goyal

SO FAR NO ONE HAS APPROACHED THE MINISTRY COMPLAINING ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS BEING DISLOCATED DUE TO THE WAR



NEW DELHI: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday informed the Rajya Sabha that the prices of edible oils have shot up all across the world because of many factors including the war in Ukraine.

Responding to a question on the impact of the Ukraine war on the import of sunflower oil in India, he said that sunflower oil constitutes only a smaller proportion in India's overall edible oil basket.

Since it was being imported

from Ukraine before the war broke out between Russia and Ukraine, the government is now examining the possibility of importing it from other countries too.

Goyal congratulated India's farmers for increased mustard crop sowing this year and said that this will reduce the country's dependence on import of edible oil. He called this an opportunity for India to encourage farmers to diversify their crops to include edible oil seeds and pulses.

Replying to a question asked by DMK member P Wilson about people who left their

businesses in Ukraine and returned to India after the war broke out, the Minister said that so far no one has approached the ministry complaining about their business being dislocated due to the war.

Although, business being done in a foreign land is an independent activity and the government will not be able to intervene in such matters, it is in talks with the importers and exporters who have been impacted by this situation and measures have been taken to ensure payments come on time, he said. **AGENCIES**

Emirates to reinstate pre-pandemic flight frequency to India

NEW DELHI: Dubai-based Emirates Airline will reinstate pre-pandemic flight frequencies to its destinations in India from April 1. The airline will be operating 170 weekly flights to nine cities in the country, including 35 weekly flights to Mumbai, 28 to New Delhi, 24 to Bengaluru and 21 to Chennai amongst others.

"The move comes on the back of the decision by the Indian government to restore international flights to and from the country in line with established bilateral agreements from the end of March 2022," the airline said in a statement. **AGENCIES**

'India's domestic aviation sector set to recover fully by mid-2022'

HYDERABAD: India's civil aviation sector is likely to rebound quickly from Covid-19 crisis even as the rising oil prices, and the war in Ukraine will have an impact on the overall aviation market, a top Airbus official said.

Remi Maillard, President and MD, Airbus India and South Asia, believes that domestic traffic in India will fully recover by the middle of the current year while international traffic will rebound by the next year.

"The Covid crisis has had a massive impact on the industry and air traffic in India. We see traffic recovering on the back of strong demand," he said and welcomed the decision of the Civil Aviation Ministry to reopen to international traffic from March 27.

Addressing a news conference where he announced the company's latest market forecast for India, Maillard believes that the outlook is promising and fundamentals of the economy are strong.



To a query about rising oil prices and the Ukraine war, he admitted the crises would have an impact. Stating that the world is facing crises from a security and defence environment standpoint, he said they were impacting and would continue to impact the aviation and aerospace industry. "Crises which we are observing will have an impact but I am also fully convinced that aviation will remain an engine to drive the economies of all countries and will remain a powerful force to unite people," he said.

Airbus has forecast that India will require 2,210 new aircraft over the next 20 years.

"Just as the economy continues to improve, we believe traffic is going to go up here. This is going to drive the need for more aircraft. The fundamentals in general continue to improve. We are bullish where the market is going to go," said Brent McBratney, Head of Airline Marketing, Airbus India and South Asia.

The Airbus officials pointed out that India's air traffic grew by 9 per cent in the last 20 years and the country established itself as the third largest domestic market in the world. They believe India will replicate this performance in the international market in the next 20 years.

The passenger traffic in India is expected to grow at 6.2 per cent per annum by 2040, the fastest among the major economies and well above the global average of 3.9 per cent. They see a huge potential for India in the international long-haul market out of India. Foreign carriers have captured 94 per cent of the growth in the long-haul market over the last 20 years. **AGENCIES**

'HUNARBAAZ-DESH KI SHAAN' to witness Parineeti Chopra's swayamvar

Bolly Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra is all set for her swayamvar in the upcoming weekend episode of 'Hunarbaaz-Desh Ki Shaan'. Parineeti is often heard saying on the show that she is ready to get married and looking for a perfect match. Few popular faces of the television industry are going to be part of Parineeti's swayamvar like 'Kumkum Bhagya' actor Arjit Taneja, 'Begusarai' actor Vishal Aditya Singh, 'Bigg Boss 13' fame Siddhartha Dey and former 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 10' contestant Shivin Narang. From bringing flowers, to dancing and to showing other acts, they will do everything to impress the 'Hasee Toh Phasee' actress. Judges Karan Johar, Mithun Chakraborty and hosts Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiya will be seen helping Parineeti in taking the right decision. Veteran singer Kumar Sanu joins the panel as a special guest. Karan Johar will call the candidates on the stage one by one to show their talent and prove themselves. 'Hunarbaaz-Desh Ki Shaan' airs on Colors.

AGENCIES



'PARINEETI IS OFTEN HEARD SAYING ON THE SHOW THAT SHE IS READY TO GET MARRIED AND LOOKING FOR A PERFECT MATCH'

POTPOURRI

Anushka Sharma

STEPS AWAY FROM HER PRODUCTION COMPANY TO FOCUS ON ACTING



Anushka Sharma has stepped away from Clean Slate Filmz (CSF), a production banner that she co-founded with her brother Karnesh Ssharma in the year 2013. The actress shared the news of her departure from the production company through social media on Saturday. The actress wants to commit her time to the craft of acting and this decision allows her to dedicate her time and resources to her first love which is acting. The move makes Karnesh the sole decision maker and places him at the helm of affairs at Clean Slate Filmz. Taking to her Instagram, Anushka shared a long note as she wrote in the caption, "Onwards and Upwards @kans26 @officialcsfilms! My best wishes are always with you!!" The actress shared in the long note, "When I started Clean Slate Filmz with my brother Karnesh Ssharma, we were novices when it came to production but we had a fire in our belly and we wanted to try and set the agenda of entertainment in India through clutter-breaking content. AGENCIES



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann pays tribute to freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev on the occasion of their 91st death anniversary at Hussainiwala, in Ferozepur on Wednesday. PHOTO: PRABHJOT GILL

IWL 2021-22 to start on April 15 in Bhubaneswar

NEW DELHI: The Hero Indian Women's League is all set for a return in the 2021-22 season, as it will be held in Bhubaneswar from April 15.

This season's Hero IWL will feature 12 teams that will fight it out for the top prize in Indian Women's Football, and will fight it out in a league format from April 15 to May 26, with the champions of the tournament getting the chance to play in the next edition of the AFC Women's Club Championship. The matches will be played at the Kalinga Stadium, the Seventh Battalion Ground and the Capital Ground.

Defending Champions Gokulam Kerala FC, who also join the league as the champions of Kerala, will also be joined by the champion teams from 10 other states - Odisha Police (Odisha), Hans Women FC (Delhi), Kickstart FC Karnataka (Karnataka), Gokulam Kerala FC (Kerala), Sethu Madurai (Tamil Nadu), PIFA Sports Colaba FC (Maharashtra), Mata Rukmani



FC (Chhattisgarh), Sirvodem Sports Club (Goa), Indian Arrows (AIFF's Developmental Team), SSB Women FC (West Bengal), Sports Odisha (Odisha), and one club from the Hero IWL Qualifiers. The qualifiers of the Hero

IWL will take place in New Delhi from April 1 to 5, where four clubs - Guwahati City FC, Golazo FC, ARA FC, and YWC will fight it out at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi, in a round robin format with the top team proceeding to the tournament proper.

"It's great that we are being able to have the Hero IWL once again, and that too in Odisha, a state that has so closely been linked with Indian football over the past," said AIFF Leagues and Development CEO Sunando Dhar. "We will have the Hero IWL in a league format this time, which will allow the clubs to play more number of matches, and the champions teams from all the states will be fighting it out for the top prize."

"We will also have the qualifiers for the Hero IWL in New Delhi, and that will further help the other teams from other states get the opportunity to participate in the league as well," he further stated. AGENCIES

No regrets that my 175* was not recorded, it's still etched in my head: Kapil Dev

MANESAR: Former India skipper Kapil Dev on Thursday said he has no regret that there is no video footage available of his unbeaten 175-run innings against Zimbabwe during the 1983 World Cup.

The win in the '83 World Cup remains one of the greatest sporting achievements in Indian history. Scripting that victory would not have been possible if the then Team India skipper Kapil didn't come up with an epic knock at the Tunbridge Wells ground against Zimbabwe on June 18, 1983. But unfortunately for the Indian cricket fans, Kapil's innings was never recorded on camera because of a nation-wide strike by sole broadcasters BBC back then.

After India were reduced to 9/4 by Zimbabwe, Kapil then played some remarkable cricket to guide his side to a respectable total of 266/8 in 60 overs. India won the game by 31 runs. "I don't like to criticise people. People say



don't you feel bad it wasn't recorded, and I always say 'no' because it is recorded in my head," Dev said at an event organised by telecom operator Airtel to demonstrate some of its 5G-led immersive user experiences at its Network Experience Center in Manesar, Haryana.

At the event, the telecom operator demonstrated an immersive and India's first 5G-powered hologram of the former India cricketer

and recreated the in-stadia experience of the cricketer's unbeaten innings against Zimbabwe.

Also, the Haryana Hurricane's signature Natraj shot was shown in such a manner that a person can experience the moment at a 180-degree view. Asked if that particular innings was his finest performance, the legend refuted by saying that it was, however, an "important" innings. AGENCIES

Italian Embassy to host FDCI X Lakme Fashion Week opening show

NEW DELHI: Lakme Fashion Week and The Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) announced the Opening Show by Rahul Mishra is to be hosted by the Italian Embassy. The show will take place on the 22nd of March 2022 in New Delhi. The Opening Show will integrate the best of Italy with one of India's leading designers. The show marks the start of the full physical, season-fluid edition scheduled from 23-27 March 2022 in New Delhi.

Ambassador of Italy to India, H.E. Vincenzo De Luca said, "We are eager to partner this year with FDCI X Lakme Fashion Week. This collaboration kicked off in 2021 with Reliance Brands and has since then brought together the best of Italy and India in the field of lifestyle and fashion. We will have

onboard some of the most exclusive Italian brands which are the true actors of Italian soft power around the world. I am sure this partnership will open great opportunities for both the Italian and Indian market and will encourage a growing number of designers to showcase and work in both countries." Commenting on the showcase Rahul Mishra said, "Italy, like a second home, has always had a special place in my heart. Since my initial days as a designer studying in Milano, I have found influence in the Italian history of art, fashion and architecture. And it has significantly contributed to my overall perspective of design and helped shape my point of view towards the application of Indian craft in contemporary fashion. AGENCIES



Moderna to seek FDA approval for vaccinating kids under 6 years



WASHINGTON: US drug maker Moderna said it will request the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to grant emergency use authorization for its Covid-19 vaccine to inoculate children under 6 years of age. The company will submit the request to the FDA, as well as the European Medicines Agency and other global regulators "in the coming weeks", Xinhua news agency quoted Moderna as saying in a statement on Wednesday.

The submission was based on tests of its Covid-19 vaccine, known as mRNA-1273, in children aged 6 months to under 2 years, and 2 years to under 6 years.

The interim analysis showed a robust neutralising antibody response in both age groups after a 25 microgram two-dose primary series of mRNA-1273 along with a favourable safety profile, according to the company. In the study, vaccine efficacy in children aged 6 months to 2 years was 43.7 per cent, and 37.5 per cent in the 2 to under 6 years age group, said Moderna. AGENCIES

Yoon urges Xi to cooperate closely for N Korean denuclearization

SEOUL: South Korean President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol on Friday called on Chinese President Xi Jinping to cooperate closely for North Korea's denuclearization and the stable management of the political situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Yoon made the call during a 25-minute phone conversation with Xi a day after North Korea test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile for the first time since 2017, reports Yonhap News Agency.

"Regarding North Korea's ICBM-class missile launch yesterday, President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol stressed that the people are greatly concerned over the rapid escalation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula and in the region caused by North Korea's serious provocation," Yoon's spokesperson Kim Eun-hye said.

"(Yoon) called for the two countries to cooperate closely to realise the complete denuclearization of North Korea and for the stable management of the political situation on the Korean Peninsula."

Yoon and Xi agreed to communicate closely to set up a meeting between them at an early date after the President-



HIGHLIGHT

Yoon called for the two countries to cooperate closely to realise the complete denuclearization of North Korea and for the stable management of the political situation on the Korean Peninsula. China is North Korea's main ally and economic benefactor, and its cooperation is key to getting Pyongyang to dismantle its missile and nuclear weapons programs.

elect's inauguration in May, she added. North Korea earlier confirmed it successfully test-fired a new ICBM, called the Hwasong-17, on Thursday at the direct order of its leader Kim Jong-un, scrapping a self-imposed moratorium on long-range missile testing that

had been in place since late 2017.

China is North Korea's main ally and economic benefactor, and its cooperation is key to getting Pyongyang to dismantle its missile and nuclear weapons programs. AGENCIES

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