

REGION **2**



MAYOR LAUNCHES 'AAPKE SAATH' CAMPAIGN TO PHASE OUT SINGLE-USE PLASTICS FROM CHANDIGARH

Punjab CM announces to start super luxurious buses to New Delhi airport

Digging the grave of Transport mafia in the state, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday announced to start super luxurious Volvo buses to New Delhi airport from Punjab on June 15th.

"We have got the mandate of people to serve the state by eliminating mafia. Our government has already curbed liquor mafia through our New Excise policy and today I am happy to announce that now transport mafia will also be a thing of past", said the Chief Minister while announcing starting of Volvo buses.

The Chief Minister bemoaned that for decades only private transporters had run their buses on this route and looted the people by charging as per their own whims and fancies. He said that these people monopolised



the trade and exploited the people. Bhagwant Mann said that number of NRIs who came to Punjab from abroad had always complained him that why only private players have the right to ply buses on this route and why not government buses are running on them.

The Chief Minister said that now ending the transport mafia the pro-people government of



Punjab will run these super luxurious buses that will charge less than half of private transporters and give double facilities than them. He said that the booking of these buses can be easily done from websites of Punjab Roadways and PUNBUS. Likewise, Bhagwant Mann said that the time table of these buses, to and fro, will also be available on these websites.

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY **5**



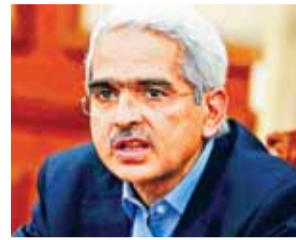
HOUSING SALES MAY DIP ON LIKELY RISE IN HOME LOAN INTEREST RATE

Das bats for cut in state taxes on petrol & diesel

Lending support to the Union government's pitch for states to reduce sales tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said a cut in VAT on fuel will help soften inflationary pressures as well as expectations.

The central government had on May 21 cut excise duty on petrol by a record Rs 8 per litre and that on diesel by Rs 6 to give relief to consumers battered by high fuel prices that have also pushed inflation to an all-time high. At that time, it asked states to lower VAT to further provide relief. Almost no state reduced VAT.

Announcing the bi-monthly monetary policy, Das said a quick survey of urban households undertaken after the



excise duty cuts on petrol and diesel on May 21 showed a significant moderation in their inflation expectations.

"In such a scenario, further reduction of State VATs on petrol and diesel across the country can certainly contribute to softening of the inflationary pressures as well as expectations," Das said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, at the time of announcing a reduction in excise duty, had urged states to reduce VAT.

POTPOURRI **8**



YOUR BELIEF, LOVE HELPED MAKE ME WHO I AM: SANJAY DUTT REMEMBERS SUNIL DUTT ON B'DAY

Nirmala Sitharaman releases 3rd instalment of revenue deficit grant of Rs 7183 cr to 14 states



The finance ministry on Monday released the third monthly instalment of revenue deficit grant of Rs 7,183 crore to 14 states.

The Fifteenth Finance Commission has recommended a total Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant of Rs 86,201 crore to 14 states for the fi-

nancial year 2022-23. This is to be released in 12 equated monthly instalments.

The states receiving this grant are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

"The Department of Expenditure has on Monday released the 3rd monthly instalment of Post Devolution Revenue Deficit (PDRD) Grant of Rs.7,183.42crore to 14 States," the ministry said in a statement.

With the release of the third instalment for the month of June 2022, the total amount of revenue deficit grants released to the states in 2022-23 stands at Rs 21,550.25 crore.

Minority students in some Kashmir schools to get online instruction



FW DESK

After the recent killings of the members of the minority community in the Valley, J&K Government has directed some government and private schools to teach children from minority communities online till the situation normalizes.

"Learning level Assessment of students in each subject should be conducted virtually through Google Form questionnaire or any other feasible virtual format and record of that be incorporated in learning level register," an official communication by the Chief Education Officer from Baramulla to government and private schools in North Kashmir district of Baramulla reads.

The district education authorities have directed the school teachers to prepare action plans for online teaching and e-materials as per their syllabus.

"Online presence of students be recorded on the attendance register," the order reads.

"The education of students is of paramount importance for us. In this backdrop instructions are hereby issued to be adhered to in letter and spirit," the official communication adds.

India's economic slowdown pronounced, BJP has no answers: Rahul



Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday lashed out at the BJP government over the state of the economy, saying the per capita income of Indians is dropping but the government is suffering from "policy bankruptcy" and has no answers.

He feared that the economic situation will only get worse in the coming times. "Indian families are suffering from the onslaught of inflation and job loss and earning less per capita than they were two years ago," Gandhi said in a Facebook post.

He said the per capita income at constant prices has dropped from Rs 94,270 to Rs 91,481. "India's economic slowdown is pronounced, and the BJP Government, which suffers from policy bankruptcy, has no answers," he also said. "The economic situation will only get worse," the Congress leader said in his post. The Congress has been attacking the government over rising prices of food items and petroleum products.

Moosewala killing: Bishnoi reveals names of arms suppliers

NEW DELHI: Gangster Lawrence Bishnoi has told Delhi Police Special Cell about the hideout and names of the arms suppliers, who are based in Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan. Police suspect these suppliers could be the ones who helped the killer of Sidhu Moosewala -- one being headed by Ranjeet, resident of Faridkot, another Vijay, a resident of Haryana-Rajasthan Border and one more is Raka.

On Sunday, Bishnoi was produced before Patiala House Court which remanded him to police custody for five more days. "The Delhi Police didn't mention the Sidhu Singh Moosewala case in their remand applica-



tion. But he was remanded to five more days police custody," said advocate Vishal Chopra, the counsel of Bishnoi.

The sources have, however, claimed that the arms suppliers whose names have come up during the course of investigation, could be the same who supplied arms to the killer of Moosewala.

"Mukesh alias Puneet and Om alias Shakti and Harvinder of Jitender Gogi gang were held by us in April. They have told us that one Raka supplied them illegal weapons. Rohit alias Moi and Dinesh Karala who are handling Gogi gang, had helped them in procuring arms."

Govt hikes paddy MSP by Rs 100/qtl for 2022-23

The government on Wednesday hiked the minimum support price (MSP) of paddy by Rs 100 to Rs 2,040 per quintal for the 2022-23 crop year.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the increase in MSP for all mandated Kharif (summer) crops for the 2022-23 crop year.

"In today's cabinet meeting, MSP of 14 kharif crops was approved," Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters.

The MSP of common grade variety of paddy has been increased to Rs 2,040 per quintal for the 2022-23 crop year from



Rs 1,940 in the previous year.

The support price of 'A' grade variety of paddy has been hiked to Rs 2,060 per quintal from Rs 1,960.

Paddy is the main kharif crop, the sowing of which has already begun. The Met department has projected nor-

mal monsoon for the June-September period.

The minister also highlighted several programmes launched during the last eight years by the Modi government to boost farmers' income and ensure comprehensive growth of the farm sector.

Industrial production grows 7.1% in April



Industrial output grew by 7.1% in April on better performance by power and mining sectors, as per government data released on Friday.

Manufacturing sector recorded a growth of 6.3 per cent in the first month of the current financial year, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

It further said growth rates over corresponding period of the previous year are to be interpreted considering the unusual circumstances on account of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020.

As per the data, power and mining sectors grew by 11.8 per cent and 7.8 per cent, respectively.

As per the use-based classification, the capital goods segment recorded a growth of 14.7 per cent, while the consumer durables sector expanded by 8.5 per cent.

NSO further said the primary goods, intermediate goods, infrastructure/ construction goods, and consumer non-durables sectors expanded by 10.1 per cent, 7.6 per cent, 3.8 per cent, and 0.3 per cent, respectively.

EMIs to rise as RBI hikes repo rate by 50 bps; 2nd increase in 5 weeks

Home, auto and other loan EMIs will rise after Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points, the second increase in five weeks, to rein in rise in prices that it saw continuing to hurt consumers in the near term.

With inflation persistently hovering above the upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent, the RBI's six-member rate-setting panel voted unanimously to raise the lending rate of the repurchase (repo) rate by 50 basis points to 4.90 per cent, Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

The Standing Deposit Facility rate and the Marginal Standing Facility Rate were accordingly adjusted higher by the same quantum to 4.65 per cent and 5.15 per cent, respectively.

The increase follows a 40 bps rise in early May at an



unscheduled meeting that kicked off the central bank's tightening cycle.

To balance the inflation-growth dynamics, Das said RBI will remain focused on the withdrawal of accommodation as system liquidity continues to be high. Withdrawal of accommodation will be done in a way that growth will continue to get adequate support.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) raised its inflation forecast for the current fiscal (April 2022 to March 2023) to 6.7 per cent from

April prediction of 5.7 per cent but retained its economic growth projection at 7.2 per cent.

"Inflation has steeply increased beyond the upper tolerance level," Das said announcing the policy decisions. "Upside risks to inflation as highlighted in last policy meetings have materialised earlier than expected." Food, energy and commodity prices remain elevated. It also suggests that most of the excess inflation is due to global/supply-side factors.

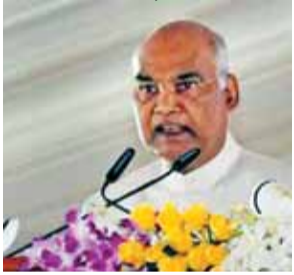
Govt, opposition may differ on ideology, but there shouldn't be animosity: Kovind

LUCKNOW: President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday said there can be differences of ideology between the ruling party and the opposition but there should not be any animosity between both the sides.

Addressing a joint sitting of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council and the Assembly, Kovind said the UP Legislature has a glorious history of dignified amicability between the ruling party and the opposition.

"Sometimes, there have been undignified incidents which are contrary to this rich tradition. You have to make an effort to forget them by considering those as an exception."

"You all have to further strengthen the rich political tradition of UP. In a democracy, there can be differences of ideology between the ruling



party and the opposition but there should not be any animosity (vaimanasya) between both the sides," Kovind said.

Kovind said the Legislature is the temple of democracy and the people consider the public representatives as their 'bhaagyavidhata' (one who decides the destiny).

"The people of the state have a lot of hope and expectations from you, and fulfilling their expectations is the most important work for you."

Nothing to hide from ED: Cong on summons to Sonia & Rahul Gandhi



and he is likely to appear before it. He was earlier summoned on June 2 but had sought time as he was abroad at the time.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera told reporters, "We are a law-abiding party. We follow rules. So, if they have been summoned, of course, they will go. We have nothing to hide." "We are not like them. We remember when Mr Amit Shah was running around in 2002 to 2013," he said. "They will learn some lessons from us on what kind of people who adhere to the path of truth are. They should learn from us," Khera said. The Congress is likely to make it a big event on Monday when Rahul Gandhi appears before the probe agency's headquarters in central Delhi. The case pertains to the probe into the alleged financial irregularities in the party-promoted Young Indian that owns the National Herald newspaper. The paper is published by Associated Journals Limited (AJL) and owned by Young Indian Pvt Limited.

The Congress president, who tested positive on Thursday, is yet to recover and her latest report is not Covid-negative. Rahul Gandhi has been asked to appear before the ED on June 13

Punjab CM seeks support from Canadian govt to nab gangsters operating from Canada



CHANDIGARH: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann today sought support from Canada government for nabbing the gangsters operating from Canadian soil.

The Chief Minister flagged the issue with Canadian High Commissioner Cameron Mackay, who called on the former at his residence on Friday.

The Chief Minister expressed concern over the mushrooming up of gangs and gangsters in both the countries. Bhagwant Mann

informed the Canadian High Commissioner that gangsters operating from Canadian soil are disturbing hard earned peace of state. He said that these gangsters create law and order problem on one hand and derail the progress of the state on other hand.

Advocating a harsh punitive action against the gangsters, Bhagwant Mann said that they should be punished under severest of severe provisions of law so that it acts as deterrent for others. The Chief Minister, while battling for joint Police

operation between Canada and Punjab, said that it is the only way which can free both these lands from gangsters. He apprised the High Commissioner that Punjab Police has a glorious tradition of upholding law and order situation even in hostile situations adding that if advanced Police force like Canada cooperates with Punjab Police then these gangs can be weeded out from easily.

The Chief Minister asked the Canadian High Commissioner to explore the feasibility of having a direct tie up between Punjab and Canada Police so that gangsters can be put behind the bars. He said that this is the need of the hour as gangsters and their actions are posing serious threat to life, economy and society in both Canada and Punjab. Bhagwant Mann expressed hope that Canada and Punjab will script a new success story with this robust cooperation.

Drones may replace weather balloons soon

India is set to deploy drones to gather atmospheric data that is currently collated by sending sensors through weather balloons released from at least 55 locations across the country twice every day.

The sensors embedded in a radiosonde, which is a telemetry instrument carried by a weather balloon, record atmospheric pressure, temperature, wind direction and speed as the hydrogen-filled weather balloon soars up to 12 km height and transmit data to the ground receiver through radio signals.

However, weather balloons and radiosondes are unretrievable as they drift afar from weather stations that release them in the atmosphere. We are now exploring the possibility of using drones to gather this atmospheric data which is crucial for weather forecasting, M Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences

Punjab Budget to be presented on June 27

The Budget session of the Punjab Assembly will commence on June 24 and the Bhagwant Mann-led government will present its first budget on June 27.

A decision in this regard was taken at meeting of the cabinet here.

Congratulations to all Punjabis! The budget prepared with the suggestions of common people will be presented for the first time in Punjab's history. It was decided in a cabinet meeting of the Punjab government that the budget session will be from June 24 till June 30 and the budget of common people will be presented on June 27, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said in a tweet.

Earlier, the AAP-led government had sought suggestions from the general public for the



state budget for the year 2022-23 while dubbing it as a "Janta Budget".

The AamAadmi Party came to power in March after winning 92 of the 117 Punjab assembly segments in the state.

The assembly had passed a vote-on-account for the first three months, April to June, of the financial year 2022-23.

Mayor launches 'Aapke Saath' campaign to phase out single-use plastics from Chandigarh

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Considering the adverse impacts of single-use plastic items on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, Sarbjit Kaur, Mayor, Chandigarh gave a call to phase out single-use plastics from Chandigarh. Keeping this in view, various awareness camps under the theme "Aapke Saath" were organized today in different parts of city to engage with Market Welfare Associations.



pledge to not use single use plastics.

While speaking during the interactive session on various themes related to single-use plastics and plastic waste management Sarbjit Kaur, Mayor announced a cash prize of Rs. 1 lac to the first Market Welfare Association which emerges as Plastic free in the next 3 months. She said that discouraging people from using single-use plastic, the MCC has been seizing plastic carry bags from the markets and at the same time efforts are being made to propagate the concept of cloth bags. However, shopkeepers May request each customer to

bring their own shopping bags and also put up notice boards to that effect.

While addressing the representatives of Market Welfare Associations at community centre, sector 26, Anindita Mitra, IAS, Commissioner, MCC said that spurred by the mounting mixed plastic waste in the garbage, MCC has chalked out a comprehensive action plan to root out the environmental menace. She said that the MCC has launched three month long aggressive campaign to restrict the use of single-use plastic products in a phased manner with the support of Market Welfare Associations.

She said that the campaign plans to sensitize the citizens on the importance of rejecting single-use plastic and how these products adversely affect the environment. She said that the authorities have been implementing the ban on plastic carry bags since 2016 but recently, the usage has spiked. She said that the MCC has planned to conduct exhibitions of alternative products and organise street walks to sensitize the public in association with Market Welfare Associations.

Coming forward to eliminate single-use plastic items, the Market Welfare Association in sector 46 decided to extend 2% discount on all items for the residents who bring their own shopping bags for carrying grocery items from the shops. During the awareness programme at community centre, sector 46, the office bearers of Market Welfare Associations assured that they will organise awareness campaigns in their local area against the use of harmful plastic products.

MCC starts plogging pick litter as you jog

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Plogging is trending in the city beautiful with Municipal Corporation Chandigarh's new push 'Clean as you jog', gradually trying to embrace this new fitness trend, in which joggers pick up garbage as they run, to save the environment.

Commemorating Environment week from 5th-11th June, on Friday, Sarbjit Kaur, Mayor, Chandigarh kick-started the initiative of plogging at Manimajra area during which group of local residents, MCC officers and officials and around 20-25 fitness enthusiasts and morning walkers, carrying jute bags and wearing gloves in their hands, jogged and picked up the trash all along their jogging tracks inside the garden and road berms.

Speaking on the new initiative, the Mayor said that plogging is a new concept that is trending in the city and is an environment friendly exercise mashup that combines jogging with the environmental benefits of picking up trash. While jogging helps the people to stay



fit, collecting the trash from the gardens and road sides helps to keep the environment fit and fine, she added.

She said that this activity helps people burn some extra calories as they are constantly bending to collect the trash all along the route. It also helps to break the monotony of jogging. Unaware of the new initiative and oblivious to what was going on around, some of the morning walkers at Mamimajra area were taken by surprise when they spotted the joggers stopping along the tracks just to pick up trash and store it in a waste bag, said the Mayor.

Anindita Mitra, IAS, Commissioner, Municipal Corporation Chandigarh started plog-

ging at New lake area, sector 42, where Jasbir Singh, area councillor and other members of resident welfare association and locals alongwith volunteers of NGO joined for plogging.

The Commissioner said that the aim was not to collect huge quantities of trash or cleaning the entire gardens or road sides and make it free of garbage; it was just a new form of exercise coupled with a simple effort to save the environment. She said that such activities would be carried out every weekend to start with. Later, it will be expanded to all parks and throughout the week when citizens from all parts of city join in.

Ranjit Sagar Lake in Pathankot to be developed as world class tourist destination: Chief Secretary



With an aim to further enhance and promote tourism to put Punjab on Global map, the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann led Punjab Government is all set to develop Ranjit Sagar Lake in Pathankot as an International Standard Tourism Destination. Taking a step towards making Punjab as the tourist attraction spot, the Punjab Government, on Friday, has organised an Investor Summit in New Delhi to extend an invitation to the Private sector to invest in the Tourism and other sectors in the State.

While special focus was laid on the development of Ranjit Sagar Lake as an International Tourist Destination, various other projects having the potential to be developed as Tourist spots were also showcased during the Summit.

Racket involved in illegal kidney transplant business busted with 11 arrests

SATISH HANDA

With the arrest of a surgeon Priyansh Sharma alias Dr Sameer (34) a resident of Rohini at Delhi did MBBS from Shiram Moorty Samarak Institute of Medical Sciences Bareilly, del master in surgery and presently working in a private hospital at Delhi as surgeon arrested by Hauz Khas New Delhi police allegedly involved in a racket illegal kidney transplant business, with this the total number of arrests in the case reached 11 including junior doctors, operation theatre (OT) technicians, OT helpers and few agents working in marketing concept services for Ram Chander Hospital at Gohana in Sonapat district involved in this illegal business for search of kidney donors, buyers and transplanting kidneys.

The mastermind of racket Kuldeep studied up to high school was having nearly 20 years experience in conducting large number of kidney transplants under the guidance of surgeons as well as independently at different hospitals after doing diploma course in OT technician. On a clue that hospital at Gohana was involved in illegal sale, purchase and kidney transplants business Delhi police constituted a investigation team led by Veer Singh ACP Hauz Khas police station New Delhi who collected important evidences and conducted a surprise raid at Ram Chander Hospital Gohana last Thursday and arrested four persons including Kuldeep having no degree but expert in doing urology surgeries with his about 20 years experience and actively involved in this illegal business. After preliminary investigation police arrested another doctor Saurabh Mittal working at BLK Hospital Delhi assisting the racket during involved in illegal surgeries when removing or planting a kidney.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Ram Chander Hospital was having handsome business when started about two years ago attracting large number of patients at general OPD every day, but gradually lost interest in the treatment of routine patients when started illegal kidney transplant business earned amount worth Rs six to seven crores in a short period. During preliminary investigation, Kuldeep admitted that they used to pay amount between Rs 3 to 5 lakh to kidney donors usually selling their kidney to meet urgent demand of money and agents were making search for kidney donors which included families below poverty line in labour colonies, beggars usually spending nights at the railway station, bus stands, outside religious places, outside hospitals and passing nights even on roadside. He disclosed that amount worth Rs 50000 was being paid as commission to agents bringing a kidney donor and charging amount worth Rs 40 to 70 lakh each for transplant of a kidney.

Police investigation revealed that a 'Jhola Chhap' doctor identified as Sonu Rohilla was handling all activities as regard purchase, sale and transplant of kidneys at Ram Chander Hospital located at a lonely place on Panipat Road. According to residents residing at a distance of 200 to 300 meters away from the hospital told that few luxury vehicles were seen parked outside the hospital usually on Saturday and Sunday late nights suspecting illegal kidney transplant business going on at the hospital during this time.

Moosewala killing: Punjab Police nabs 3rd suspect from Haryana

SATISH HANDA

The Punjab Police has arrested another person in connection with the killing of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, taking the number of people held in the case so far to three.

Davinder alias Kala was nabbed on Sunday evening from Haryana's Fatehabad. Two suspects involved in the killing had allegedly stayed with him police sources said

on Monday.

On June 3, two other suspects were nabbed by the Punjab Police from Fatehabad and their roles in Moosewala's killing were being probed.

Two days after the killing of Moosewala in Mansa district, the Punjab Police on Tuesday made the first arrest in this case.

The arrested person, Man-

preet Singh, was accused of providing logistic support to the assailants.

On May 29, Moosewala was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Punjab's Mansa district, a day after the state government curtailed his security cover. His cousin and a friend, who were travelling in a jeep with him, were also injured in the attack. Moosewala was among the

424 people whose security was withdrawn or curtailed by the Punjab Police on a temporary basis.

The state police had termed the incident a case of an inter-gang rivalry and had said the Lawrence Bishnoi gang was behind the killing. Canada-based GoldyBrar, who is a member of the gang, had claimed the responsibility for the murder.

Six of a racket running fake immigration business cheated over 100 youths arrested

SATISH HANDA

Police has already recovered more than 96 passports, 14 mobile phones, two printers, two cars and Rs 70000 cash from six arrested persons of a inter-state gang running fake immigration business allegedly cheated more than 100 youths willing to settle abroad and also issued few fake work permits for jobs and Visa for Singapore and other countries, cheating youths amount worth over crore of rupees through offices at Jagadhari Gate Ambala City and in few other districts in Haryana as well as in other states including Punjab and U.P. The racket of cheats used to close down or shift their offices quite often after cheatings as revealed during investigation.

Police started investigation and search for the members of gang when received large number of complaints and found office at Ambala closed but succeeded in arrest of six persons of inter-state racket



identified as Vivek resident of village Mandia in Chandigarh, Amrit Pal resident of village Samrala in Chandigarh, Vikki resident of Rajpura in Punjab, Jaspreet Singh alias Jas also resident of Rajpura in Punjab, Rohit resident of a village in Karnal district and Mandeep resident of Kalay in Kaithal district. During investigation police recovered large number of fake Aadhar Cards, fake work permits, appointment letters, Visa and other fake documents. All arrested accuse were sent to jail under judicial custody after one day police remand. Information reveals, prime accused of racket hailing residing at Ludhiana and Bhatinda in Punjab are yet absconding and police searching them for their arrest.

SAD asks Kejriwal to dismiss Transport minister Laljit Singh Bhullar immediately



FW DESK

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) today demanded Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Convener Arvind Kejriwal should take immediate action against Transport minister Laljit Singh Bhullar who had violated the motor vehicle act as well as endangered the lives of his security personnel by sitting on the sunroof of a moving vehicle.

In a statement here, party Spokesman Dr Daljit Singh Cheema said it was shocking that he was sitting on the sunroof of a moving vehicle and exposed security personnel who were trying to stabilize him but also did this to the accompaniment of a song eulogizing consumption of liquor. "In case Kejriwal does not dismiss this minister then it will be surmised that he too is in agreement with the act", the SAD leader disclosed.

Rift still exists in Haryana Congress even after return of eight leaders

SATISH HANDA

Rift between groups of Congress party in Haryana state have not come to halt rather have increased in spite of return of eight heavy weight leaders in the party and Congress high command has given responsibility to former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda also leader of opposition in Haryana Vidhan Sabha and newly appointed Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee president Uday Bhan also quite near and dear to Hooda to build strong Congress infrastructure in the state. It is an open fact that Congress in Haryana state had come up as second major political party in the state in 2019 Vidhan Sabha polls only due to Hooda having majority of Congress MLAs his followers. Former HPCC president Kumari Shelja had expelled four MLAs from Congress allegedly involved in anti-party activities when denied tickets and few of them contested 2019 Vidhan Sabha polls against Congress candidates. Congress failed to grow and form government in the state after 2019 Vidhan Sabha polls in spite of the fact having good strength of party MLAs in the state due to rift



going on between the supporters of Hooda leader of opposition in Vidhan Sabha and HPCC president Kumari Shelja.

The return of eight heavy weight political leaders in Congress with the influence of Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his son Deepender Hooda also a Rajya Sabha member has failed to bring miracles in sinking Congress party in the state. Among those eight returned to Congress with the efforts of Hooda include were holding the chairs of former minister, Chief Parliamentary Secretary (CPS) and MLA in past when Congress was ruling in the state include Sharda Rathore from MLA from Ballabgarh Vidhan Sabha constituency and a CPS, Subhash Choudhary former MLA from Jagadhari Vidhan

Sabha constituency and also state minister, Rakesh Kamboj former MLA from Indri Vidhan Sabha constituency, Parminder Dhull former MLA from Julana Vidhan Sabha constituency, Ram Niwas Ghodla former MLA from Barwala Vidhan Sabha constituency, Zile Ram Sharma former MLA from Asandh Vidhan Sabha constituency and CPS, Naresh Selwal former MLA from Uklana Vidhan Sabha constituency and Raj Kumar Valmiki for MLA from Nilokheri Vidhan Sabha constituency and CPS, however are yet unsuccessful to strengthen Congress network in the state and likely to give a tough fight to the candidates of prominent political parties in the state including ruling BJP-JJP contestants in 2024 Vidhan Sabha polls.

Power Corporation starts digital alive certificate facility for its pensioners

Power minister Punjab Harbhajan Singh ETO disclosed that to provide facility to PSPCL pensioners regarding their alive certificate, Punjab state power corporation limited has started a digital alive certificate facility for its pensioners.

Power Minister said that PSPCL has tied up with - JEEVAN PRAMAAN - AN AADHAAR BASED DIGITAL ALIVE-CERTIFICATE organization using AadhaarFaceRd App. While giving the details about the digital alive certificate facility he also added that presently PSPCL has nearly 75000 pensioners and earlier every pensioner needed to visit the PSPCL office's once a year to give their alive certificate in PSPCL office. He further said that now for pensioners of PSPCL, it is not mandatory to visit PSPCL offices to provide their alive certificate.

FIR against firm for recovery of Rs 126 crore alleged PWD frauds

SATISH HANDA

Headlines appearing in newspapers since past about a year as regard several frauds alleged in construction of large number Haryana state government buildings by Public Works Department at Ambala, now action is being taken by the government to register FIR against the construction firm for recovery of Rs 126 crore in as many as 16 projects. However, three officers of PWD (B&R) supervising the work including Executive Engineer, SDO and Junior Engineer were suspended by the government after detecting frauds. Investigation reveals, senior officers of the department at Chandigarh in spite of complaint and recommending action against alleged accuse responsible for embezzlements for amount worth crores of rupees in several projects the file remained dumped or hanging from one table to another for



months to save concerned alleged accuse or the reason best known to them. The matter was much opposed in Vidhan Sabha session by the political parties in opposition and the frauds adversely affected the reputation of ruling BJP-JJP government in the state.

Rs 66 crore alleged fraud in construction of International standard football stadium in The War Heroes Memorial Stadium Ambala Cantt in which payment for amount worth crores of rupees were released to the suppliers by the officers of PWD (B&R) handling the

projects on the basis of fake bills when building material including huge steel stocks were not supplied by the firms which severely affected the reputation of not only PWD (B&R) of the state but also ruling state government. Among other frauds detected in construction of several important government projects at Ambala include over Rs 13 crore alleged fraud in construction of Mini Secretariat at Ambala, alleged fraud worth over Rs 7.74 crore in construction of building for Homeopathy College at Chandpur near Ambala Cantt.

ATFI National President submitted Memorandum to State Home Minister Ajay Mishra Teni to take action against Anti-nationals

SATISH HANDA

National President of Anti-Terrorist Front India Viresh Shandilya on Wednesday met State Minister of Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra and submitted a memorandum regarding the alarming law and order situation in Punjab. He made an appeal, Ministry of Home Affairs to take stern action against Anti-Nationalist who raised Khalistan Jindabad slogans in Amritsar and showcased photographs of Jarnail Singh Bhindrawala and other terrorists also displayed as well as shouted slogans in favour of Jarnail Singh Bhindrawala by separatist leader in Punjab. In the memorandum Shandilya mentioned that in the presence of Punjab Police so called organisation Dal Khalsa and Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) held a march and issued a warning to Government of



India and also demanded independence in the name of new State Khalistan.

Viresh Shandilya requested State Home Minister Ajay Mishra Teni to take strict action against all the culprits and further appealed that National Investigation Agency should register a case against separatist leaders who disturbed law and order situation of Punjab. Shandilya told Mishra that this is a conspiracy to revive terrorism in Punjab again and all these processions and march are happening on the instigation of Pakistan ISI and Babbar Khalsa International terrorist Jagtar Singh Hawara and others.

NCB : 40% increase in NDPS cases recorded in Haryana in a year

SATISH HANDA

Looking at drastic increase in drug addiction among youths of Haryana state in past few years Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij started a separate Narcotic Control Bureau (NCB) in the state led by a senior IPS officer Shrikant Jadhav also holding the charge of Additional Director General Police Ambala division to wipe out fast increasing drug smuggling, drug supply and drug addiction among people in Haryana state. According to police record 2746 cases were registered under NDPS Act in the state during year 2020 in which 3975 persons were arrested and pushed behind bars by the police recording between 35-40% growth in such cases during the year. Increasing cases of drug addiction among young generation including teenage females and working women residing in hostels and in PG houses is a



matter of deep concern for state government.

In a recent seminar held at KalpanaChawla Women Technical Institute at Karnal in which Dr Ashok Kumar Sharma was main speaker. While addressing a large gathering of youths he briefed awareness about ill effects of use of drugs including Opium, Charas, Heroine, Bhang, Hashish, Ganja, Chitta, Poppy-husk, use of intoxicated tablets, capsules and injections by youths demanding to take very stern action against drug smugglers and suppliers in the state playing with the future of young generation.

Dr. Areet Kaur assumes charge as Director Health and Family Welfare Department Punjab

CHANDIGARH: Dr. Areet Kaur, PCMS-I, MD Ophthalmology, here today assumed the charge of new Director Health Services, Punjab. She was previously posted as Director Family Welfare in addition to the post of Director National Health Mission, Punjab.

Dr Areet has a vast experience at hand in her career spanning more than 30 years since she joined the PCMS in the year 1990 as Eye Specialist at District Hospital Fatehgarh Sahib. Thereafter, she remained posted in different hospitals

of Punjab state. In year 2014 she got promoted as Senior Medical Officer and got posted at Sub Divisional Hospital Anandpur Sahib (District Roopnagar). During her stint as Assistant Director at State Headquarter, she looked after many key assignments including National Programme for Control of Blindness and Health & Wellness Programme. It is pertinent to mention that Punjab State bagged National award for best performance in these programmes.



Modi Govt brought number of LWE-affected districts down by 70 per cent: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the Narendra Modi government has brought the number of districts affected by Left-wing extremism in the country down by 70%.

The government also lifted the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from more than 66 per cent area in the Northeast, he said after inaugurating the National Tribal Research Institute in Delhi.

The Union Home Minister said the northeast and Left-wing extremism-affected areas of the country are tribal-dominated regions and security is a precursor to development there. "Secured Northeast and secured central India pave the way for the development of tribals," he said.

Shah also said that 8,700 untoward incidents took place in the Northeast under the



Congress rule. This number has reduced to 1,700 under the Modi government, he said.

Only 87 security personnel have lost their lives in the Northeast under the Modi government as against 304 during the Congress rule, he said.

There are many institutions in the country such as the Planning Commission, now NitiAayog, Life Insur-

ance Corporation of India and the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited which have contributed immensely to the country's progress, the Union home minister said.

Similarly, this NTRI will play a pivotal role in the development of tribals in the country. This is a milestone, he said.

The institute will become

the backbone of tribal development in the run-up to 100 years of India's Independence, Shah said.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accorded top priority to research and education since he came to power.

"Under the Congress government, in 2014, Rs 7 crore had been set aside for this purpose. In 2022, we have kept Rs 150 crore for it," Shah said.

The minister added that the Modi government has increased the budget for Eklavya residential schools from Rs 278 crore to Rs 1,418 crore this financial year.

"I believe that only a tribal child can bring the 'best medal' in the Olympics as sports is a part of tribal traditions. They only need guidance, coaching, practice and a platform to showcase their talent," Shah said.

Fire breaks out at Howrah paint factory, 7 injured

Seven people were injured as a major fire broke out at a factory in West Bengal's Howrah district on Wednesday afternoon, officials said. The blaze was first spotted at the paint manufacturing unit in Shibpur around 1.40 pm, they said. "Workers were inside the factory at that time. While some managed to flee, a few got injured in the blaze," a police officer said. "Some were rushed to a nearby hospital, while a few were taken to Kolkata for better treatment," he said.

BSF troops gun down smuggler near Indo-Bangla border

An alleged smuggler was shot dead by BSF troops in West Bengal's Murshidabad district during an encounter at the Indo-Bangla border, officials said. The incident happened on Sunday, when BSF personnel observed the movement of smugglers in the area, they said. "When the jawans tried to stop the smugglers, they were attacked with sharp weapons. The troopers initially tried to stop them by using non lethal weapons."

Former Congress spokesman shoots his wife dead

GWALIOR: A former Congress spokesman allegedly shot his wife dead in the wee hours on Monday at their residence here in Madhya Pradesh, police said. The accused, Rishabh Bhadoria, is on the run. "The incident occurred in Ram Nagar locality under the Thatipur police station limits in Gwalior city. Former Congress spokesman (Gwalior unit) Rishabh Bhadoria allegedly fatally shot his wife Bhavna Bhadoria, aged around 30-31 years, using a firearm and fled," said sub-inspector Brahmanand Sharma. Rishabh's father Krishnakant Bhadoria called the police control room around 2.30 AM, he said. The exact cause behind the killing is not clear yet. Rishabh's father is also clueless about it, Sharma said.

Jailed Maha minister Nawab Malik seeks 1-day bail to cast vote in RS polls

Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik, currently in jail following arrest in a money laundering case, on Monday approached a special court here seeking bail for one day to cast vote in the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections to six seats from the state.

Last week, Maharashtra's former home minister Anil Deshmukh, who is also in jail on money laundering charges, had filed a similar application.

On Monday, a special court in Mumbai, designated to hear cases related to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, directed the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to file its affidavit to both the applications (Malik and Deshmukh) and posted them for further hearing on June 8.

The Rajya Sabha polls are scheduled on June 10.

Malik was arrested by the ED on February 23 this year in connection with a money laundering probe linked to the activities of fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim and his aides.



The NCP leader in his application sought to be released on bail for a day on June 10.

Malik in his plea claimed that he is an elected MLA and hence, is duty bound to represent the residents of his constituency in electing a representative to the Rajya Sabha, and is also desirous to cast his vote in the aforesaid biennial elections.

The 288-member Maharashtra Assembly forms the electoral college for the Rajya Sabha polls. While the two NCP MLAS

- Deshmukh and Malik- are currently in jail, one seat is lying vacant.

Apart from the four main parties Shiv Sena, NCP, Congress and BJP, the Assembly has 25 MLAs from smaller parties and Independents.

The effective election quota per candidate is 42.

The BJP, which has 106 members in the House, has nominated Union minister Piyush Goyal, Anil Bonde and Dhananjay Mahadik.

No plan to shift MPEDA headquarters from Kochi: Goyal

Union Commerce and Industries Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said there was no plan to shift the headquarters of the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) from Kerala to Andhra Pradesh. Rejecting the reports, Goyal said the statutory body under the Union Commerce and Industries Ministry will continue to operate from this southern coastal city.

"There is absolutely no plan to shift MPEDA from this beautiful city of Cochin and we have a very large set up here and it will continue to grow from strength to strength," the Minister told reporters reacting to a query after holding separate stakeholder consultations with leaders of fishermen and marine exporters here.

Recently, MPs from Kerala, Hibi Eden and T N Prathapan had met Goyal in New Delhi



to impress upon him the requirement for maintaining the MPEDA headquarters in Kochi.

Goyal said he had extensive discussions with fishermen from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karnataka on the good work being done by them on sustainable traditional fishing.

He said the fishermen also submitted several memo-

Modi dispensation is 'No Dissonance Allowed' govt: Chidambaram

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Thursday dubbed the NDA dispensation at the Centre as a "No Dissonance Allowed" government after it rejected the Environmental Performance Index.

He said the Modi government should realise that the world will not dance to the tunes of the BJP and the RSS.

"NDA Government is well known as the 'No Data Avail-



able' Government. Now it is the 'No Dissonance Allowed' Government," Chidambaram said on Twitter.

That is why it rejected the Environmental Performance Index that placed India at the last place among 180 countries, the former union minister added.

He recalled that earlier the government rejected the WHO report on excess Covid deaths as well as the Global Hunger Index. "Modi Government should realise that the world will not dance to tunes of the BJP/RSS," the Congress leader said.

Nalini's plea on parole for husband dismissed as withdrawn



The Madras High Court on Monday dismissed as withdrawn, a writ petition from Nalini Sriharan seeking six days parole for her husband Murugan. Both are among those convicted in former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.

When the writ petition from Nalini came up for hearing today, a division bench of Justices S Vaidyanathan and A D Jagadish Chandra was told the application seeking parole for Murugan on medical grounds was rejected, as he (Murugan) had violated certain provisions of the Prison Rules in the recent past and thereby rendered himself ineligible for the same.

At this juncture, the counsel representing Nalini opted to withdraw the petition. And the bench dismissed it as withdrawn. Nalini's mother Padma had on May 21 had sent a representation to the authorities concerned to grant six days emergency leave to her son-in-law Murugan on medical grounds. As there was no progress, Nalini filed the present writ petition, which was dismissed as withdrawn. Murugan, Santhan, Jayakumar, Robert Payas, Ravichandran and Nalini—all convicted in the assassination of the former PM, are serving life sentences.

Modi has weakened environmental laws in India, posing as eco-champion on world stage: Ramesh

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of hypocrisy and alleged that while he has weakened all environmental and forest laws in India, he is posing as an eco-champion on the world stage.

Ramesh said this as the prime minister is set to launch the "LiFE (Lifestyle for the Environment)" initiative on World Environment Day.

"Today is World Environment Day, celebrated since 1973. Vishguru is launching LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment). This is maximum hypocrisy, since he's weakening all environmental and forest laws, regulations and institutions at home, while posing to be an eco-champion on world stage!" the former Union minister wrote on Twitter.

Congress spokesperson



Pawan Khera also hit out at the prime minister, saying "his understanding of climate change came out clearly when he loudly proclaimed, 'There is no climate change but only 'our tolerance and habits' have changed'."

In a tweet on Saturday, Modi said, "Tomorrow, 5th June is marked as #WorldEnvironmentDay. At 6 PM, the LiFE global movement will be launched.

Nitish turns nostalgic over JP movement

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday took a trip down the memory lane, recounting his days as a student activist when he bore witness to history being made by freedom fighter and socialist leader Jayaprakash Narayan with his evocative call for "total revolution".

He was responding to queries by journalists as to whether there were any plans to celebrate the "golden jubilee" of 'Sampoorn Kranti Diwas', due in a couple of years.

"That is a very good idea", exclaimed the 70-year-old CM



with perceptible excitement. Kumar said he owes his political life to the 'JP movement' which began in 1974 and culminated in the defeat of Indira Gandhi-led Congress after the Emergency.

"Whatever political activists like us have learnt, we have

CBIC to destroy 42,000 kg narcotics on Wednesday



The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) would destroy around 42,000 kilogram narcotics at 14 locations, including Guwahati, Mumbai and Siliguri, as part of 'Drug Destruction Day' to be observed on Wednesday, the finance ministry said.

The Drug Destruction Day would be observed as a part of an iconic week of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations of the ministry to mark the 75th year of India's independence.

A total of around 42,000 kg narcotics would be destroyed at 14 locations across the country, the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman would be virtually witnessing the destruction process to be held at Guwahati, Lucknow, Mumbai, Mundra/Kandla, Patna and Siliguri and address the officers.

Road in Karkala named after Godse removed by authorities



Authorities along with police have removed a signage that was installed by the roadside in Bola gram panchayat of Karkalatak here, bearing the name of Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse.

The incident came to light on Monday following a photograph of the new road signage being circulated on social media, police sources said. Gram Panchayat officials, expressing surprise over the signage bearing Godse's name, said no such decision on naming the road was taken by the panchayat.

No plan to shift MPEDA headquarters from Kochi: Goyal

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"There is absolutely no plan to shift MPEDA from this beautiful city of Cochin and we have a very large set up here and it will continue to grow from strength to strength," the Minister told reporters reacting to a query after holding separate stakeholder consultations with leaders of fishermen and marine exporters here.

Recently, MPs from Kerala, Hibi Eden and T N Prathapan had met Goyal in New Delhi

Police arrests 4 ultras, associates for IED blast



The Jammu and Kashmir Police has claimed to have arrested four militants and their associates in connection with an IED blast, that left a soldier dead in the region's Shopian district last week.

"All the four terrorist/associates have been arrested. Congratulations to team Shopian," inspector general of police Vijay Kumar tweeted.

Naik Praveen, a soldier was killed in the attack. The explosion took place inside the private vehicle hired for the operation.

Earlier, a defence spokesperson had said that the blast was very likely from either an IED or a grenade, or a battery malfunctioning in the

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Odisha STF seizes brown sugar worth Rs 2.5 crore, Three held



BHUBANESWAR: In a major drug haul, the Special Task Force of Odisha Police seized 2.58 kg of brown sugar worth Rs 2.5 crore and arrested three peddlers here, an officer said on Monday. Based on specific information, STF personnel raided a place near AIIMS, Bhubaneswar on Sunday and seized the brown sugar from the possession of three drug peddlers. All the three peddlers belonged to Khurda district, police said.

Meanwhile, in an indication that foreign militants may once again be wending their way to Kashmir, security forces today killed two militants of proscribed outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), including one Pakistani militant identified as Tufail in north Kashmir's Kupwara village Chaktaras Kandi.

PM to inaugurate Sant Tukaram temple in Dehu on June 14

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate to the nation ShilaMandir, a temple in honour of Sant Tukaram, the 17th century saint at his birthplace Dehu, about 30 km from Pune, on June 14. Modi will interact with warkaris, devotees of Sant Tukaram who undertake the biannual pilgrimage on foot to Vithoba temple at Pandharpur in Maharashtra.

The Prime Minister will dedicate to the nation the Shila Temple of Sant Tukaram on June 14. The ShilaMandir is a temple dedicated to a slab of stone (shila) on which Sant Tukaram had meditated for 13 days. A new idol of Sant Tukaram has been installed in the temple near the shila, a temple official said.

Legend has it that Sant Tukaram was made to drown the books of his verses in the river Indrayani by scholar Rameshwar Bhat. Sant Tukaram's pleas that the verses, elucidating the essence of Vedas in Prakrit, were not his writing, but the words of God who was speaking through him, found no favour with Bhat. According to the legend, Bhat asked Sant Tukaram to drown the books of the verses in the river and declared that if it was indeed God's doing, he would return them unscathed.

Four held over gang-rape of girl in UP

BALRAMPUR (UP): Four persons were arrested in connection with the alleged gang-rape of a 16-year-old girl here, police said on Tuesday. The girl filed a complaint with the police on May 20 alleging that a youth had an illicit relationship with her mother. When she opposed this, her mother told her to keep quiet, according to the police. She said the youth, along with his associates, came to her house and raped her. Her mother had gone out and had locked the house from outside, they said quoting her complaint. When her mother returned home, the girl narrated her plight and she told the daughter that she will get married to the youth, police said. The girl alleged that she first approached a police station with her complaint but the police personnel there tried to brush aside the matter. On Monday, she approached the Superintendent of Police. Taking cognisance of the incident, the SP asked a police officer to probe the case.

Two 'hybrid' terrorists arrested in Kashmir

Security forces arrested two 'hybrid terrorists' linked to the banned Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) outfit in Sopore area of Baramulla district in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Friday.

The terrorists were arrested at a check point jointly set up by the police, CRPF and Army at Gurseer in Sopore area late on Thursday night, the officials said.

They said incriminating material, arms and ammunition have been recovered from their possession.

Giving details of the arrest, a police spokesman said security forces intercepted two persons coming from Darpora-Delina towards Seer who tried to escape from the spot but were apprehended.

"The arrested duo has been identified as Faizan Ahmad Paul (resident of Shopian) and Muzamil Rashid Mir (resident of Pulwama). Two pistols, two magazines and five pistol rounds were recovered from their possession," the spokesman said.



He said preliminary investigation revealed that the arrested persons are hybrid terrorists of the LeT and were in search of an opportunity to carry out attacks on security forces as well as civilians including outside labourers.

'Hybrid terrorist' is a term coined by security forces in Jammu and Kashmir to describe those ultras who carry out a subversive task assigned to them by their handlers before slipping back into normal life.

They are activated by the handlers on need basis, a tactic that helps them to evade the radar of security forces for little longer than those who join the ranks full time.

Akal Takhat Jathedar Awards PANTH BHUSHAN to Padam Shri Awardee Sardar Jagjit Singh Dardi

FW DESK
New Delhi

Singh Sahib Harpreet Singh, Jathedar Sri Akal Takhat Sahib & Singh Sahib G Ranjit Singh Jathedar Takhat Sri Harmandar Ji Patna Sahib awarded Panth Bhushan title to Sardar Jagjit Singh Dardi, Veteran Journalist, Padam Shri awardee at an impressive function especially organised by Delhi Sikh Gurudwara management Committee at Speaker Hall, Constitution Club of India. Shri Mohit Jain, President Indian Newspaper Society (INS) appreciated the role of Chardikala Media Group for communal harmony, National Integration and spread of education especially Punjabi Language, culture & Indian Heritage. He also mentioned the role of Sardar Dardi for the welfare of Newspaper Industry as he is Member of the Executive Committee of INS since 1988. Sardar Harmeet Singh Kalka, Presi-



dent DSGMC appreciated the sacrifices and services Sardar Dardi has rendered during last sixty years for the betterment of the Sikhs, Punjabies, the state of Punjab, Punjabi language around the globe. Sardar Vikram Jeet Singh Sahni, designated Member of Rajya Sabha said that Sardar Dardi started sacrificing at the teen age of 12 years for the creation of present Punjabi speaking State and is still working through his media both Print and Electronic to serve the Indian Community worldwide. India is proud of him and appreciates the deci-

sion of Govt. Of India to honour him with Padam Shri Award which has been presented by the President of India to him. Sardar Manjinder Singh Sirsa, former President DSGMC said that he is telecasting live performance for 8 hours daily from the sanctum sanctorum of Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, New Delhi for the last 15 years free of cost. He is also telecasting live performance from one of the highest temporal seat of the Khalsa Panth Takhat Sri Hari-mandir Ji Patna Sahib and Sach Khand Sri Hemkunt Sahib.

Both the Jathedars of Sri

Akal Takhat Sahib, Takhat Sri Dandama Sahib & Jathedar Takhat Sri Patna Sahib said that Khalsa Panth recognises the services of Padam Shri Awardee, Panth Bhushan, Bhai Sahib Sardar Jagjit Singh Dardi for his wonderful role during last 62 years for the Chardikala, Universal Welfare and spread of Gurbani around the globe vide his print, electronic and social media.

Sardar Iqbal Singh Lalpura, Chairman Minority Commission of India said that Sardar Dardi is a rare journalist who dedicated his whole life to preach Gurbani, Sikh history, culture & its glorious heritage to the human kind successfully for which he deserved one of the highest Indian Civilian Award which Govt. Of India has rightly bestowed upon him. About 50 NGOs of the capital honoured him and presented bunch of flowers, shawls & mementos to Sardar Dardi and felicitated him.

India-Iran ties set for a reset with Abdollahian's visit

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian's first visit to India this week has many implications for bilateral relations, but it is the multilateral context and timing that stand out. This is the first visit by a member of the 57-member Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, which took offence to comments made in India on the Prophet. The controversy has overshadowed India's other diplomatic engagements. As a result, his visit was an opportunity for New Delhi to project that it has successfully assuaged the Islamic world with the actions of the ruling BJP against its spokespersons. For New Delhi, which always seeks to run a balance in ties between the two rivals, the Iranian visit comes a week after that of Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz. It also coincides with the meeting of the Board of Governors of the IAEA in Vienna, which has passed strictures against Iran for its nuclear programme. On the bilateral front too, India and Iran have catching up to do, with many promises of the last summit in Delhi left unrealised. Instead of increasing Indian oil imports, investments in developing reserves, building up the Chabahar rail project and scaling up trade, India has drastically cut its Iranian engagement due to sanctions, while Iran has looked to China for more infrastructure investment. Bilateral trade dropped to just over \$2 billion (2020-21) from \$17 billion (2017-18). Ties also appeared to have been hit by New Delhi's surprise decision to join the Israel-India-UAE-U.S. group, portrayed as an "anti-Iran" coalition, and by perceptions of Iranian support to Yemeni Houthis behind the drone attack on a UAE oil facility where an Indian was among those killed. Abdollahian's visit, and a possible visit by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, may be the start of a reset of traditionally strong ties even if it is one that is buffeted by developments in other parts of the world.

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THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. CHAENG/2001/03736

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA
ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA

PRINTED AT JAGJIT PUBLISHING CO. PVT LTD
D-12, INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-1, MOHALI,
PUNJAB 160059

PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA
OWNER* : FW MEDIA

PUBLISHED AT: PLOT NO-F5, IT PARK, CHANDIGARH
CHANDIGARH 160101; PHONE: 9888040061

EDITOR* ABDUL WASEY

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



MUKESH KUMAR SRIVASTAVA ON WHY INDUS WATERS TREATY IS AN EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE OF WATER MANAGEMENT

Bridging India-Pakistan water ties



The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) is an established water-distribution treaty between India and Pakistan to use water in the Indus and its tributaries. In the words of former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower, the treaty has since its existence in 1960, served as "one bright spot ... in a very depressing world picture that we see so often", resolving the long-standing differences between India and Pakistan since Partition.

Following the 118th meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) comprising the Indus Commissioners of India and Pakistan held on May 30-31, 2022 in New Delhi, it is important to reflect on the struggles and the high stakes that the two countries have experienced to ensure a long-lasting treaty on the one hand and the lessons that can be drawn to address multiple concerns pending in the region on the other.

After years of arduous negotiations, the Indus Waters Treaty was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960, by then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and then Pakistani President Ayub Khan, negotiated by the World Bank. The treaty establishes a cooperative mechanism for exchanging information between the two countries regarding the use of the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) allocated to Pakistan and the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) allocated to India. However, the treaty also underlines provisions allowing each country to use the rivers allocated to the other for certain purposes such as irrigation and hydroelectricity. The Permanent Indus Commission, which has a commissioner from each country, oversees the cooperative mechanism and ensures that the two countries meet annually (alternately in India and Pakistan) to discuss myriad issues emerging from the treaty. This year, the commission met twice, in March in Islamabad, Pakistan, and then in New Delhi, in May.

Some differences

India-Pakistan relations have most often been embroiled in the high politics of the region's history resulting in a political stalemate

between the two countries. It is a rare feat that despite the many lows in India-Pakistan relations, talks under the treaty have been held on a regular basis.

Nonetheless, throughout its existence, there have been many occasions during which differences between the two countries were discernible. For instance, both countries held different positions when Pakistan raised objections regarding the technical design features of the Kishanganga (330 megawatts) and Ratle (850 megawatts) hydroelectric power plants located on the tributaries of the Jhelum and the Chenab, respectively, designated as "Western Rivers". However, under Articles III and VII of the treaty, India is permitted to construct hydroelectric power facilities on these rivers (subject to constraints specified in Annexures to the Treaty).

Differences were also discernible when Pakistan approached the World Bank to facilitate the setting up of a court of arbitration to address the concerns related to these two projects referred to in Article IX Clause 5 of the treaty, and when India requested the appointment of a Neutral Expert referent to Clause 2.1 of Article IX on the settlement of differences and dispute of the treaty, respectively. Disagreements continued on the issue with many meetings brokered by the World Bank to resolve their disagreements. But it

was without any success. Eventually, on March 31, 2022, the World Bank, in view of the differences, decided to resume two separate processes by appointing a neutral expert and a chairman for the court of arbitration. However, the two parties have not been able to find an acceptable solution. The appointment of a neutral expert will find precedence to address the differences since under Article IX Clause 6 of the treaty provisions, Arbitration 'shall not apply to any difference while it is being dealt with by a Neutral Expert'. Therefore, the two separate processes are more likely to generate technical and legal repercussions.

Similarly, Pakistan, invoking Article VII Clause 2 on future cooperation, raised objections on the construction and technical designs of the Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai hydropower plants located on Marusudar river, a tributary of the Chenab, in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir. The 117th and the 118th meetings of the Permanent Indus Commission held this year deliberated this issue. Here, India has assured Pakistan that all the concerned projects are treaty compliant.

Similarly, India has raised concerns on issues such as Pakistan's blockade of the Fazilka drain, which resulted in water contamination in the border areas, referent to Article II Clause 3 and Article IV Clause 4 and 6 of the treaty. During the 117th bilateral meeting in

March, Pakistan assured India of all possible actions to ensure the free flow of the Fazilka drain into the Sutlej.

Notwithstanding the differences, both countries have so far endeavoured to amicably address all such issues with both sides assuring to implement the treaty in letter and spirit.

Although there are many outstanding issues, the treaty is important and many lessons can be drawn. The treaty is an illustration of a long-standing engagement between the conflicting nations that has stood the vagaries of time. It has withstood tensions, including conflict, providing a framework for cooperation. The treaty, therefore, is considered one of the oldest and the most effective examples of water management cooperation in the region and the world. The 118th bilateral meeting corroborates its effectiveness.

With the exception of differences on a few pending issues, both countries have avoided any actions resulting in the aggravation of the conflict or acted in a manner causing conflict to resurface. The recent bilateral meeting points to mutual respect, communication and a sharing of information, despite differences.

Potential for cooperation

The treaty can serve as an edifice to address the challenges of climate change. Recognising common interests and mutual benefits, India and Pakistan can undertake joint research on the rivers to study the impact of climate change for 'future cooperation' (underlined in Article VII).

The Indus Waters Treaty also offers great potential for cooperation and development in the subcontinent which can go a long way in ensuring peace and stability. Given that both India and Pakistan have been committed to manage the rivers in a responsible manner, the Treaty can be a reference point to resolve other water-related issues in the region through regular dialogue and interaction.

Mukesh Kumar Srivastava is Senior Consultant, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi. The views expressed are personal



ANWAR SADAT EXPLAINS WHY CHINA'S CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE ON PANGONG TSO IS PEACEFUL, BUT NOT LAWFUL

Decoding China's occupation and related legalities

There are three reasons why India should be particularly concerned about China's construction activities on Pangong Tso. One, India's war with China in 1962 revealed its diplomatic miscalculations and inadequacies in defence preparedness. China surprised India with an announcement in 1957 that it had built a road through Aksai Chin linking Tibet and Xinjiang. India protested this move formally in 1958. There is still trauma in India surrounding that war. Two, China does not seem to favour the idea of entering into treaties for resolving territorial disputes and maritime disputes with its neighbours. Recently, China began constructing a bridge on a portion of Pangong Tso which India claims is its international boundary and is within its territory. A portion of the area has been under Chinese control since 1958. The Pangong Tso saw military action between the Indian and Chinese forces in 1962. There were confrontations between the forces of the two countries in 2017, and in 2020, violent clashes resulted in casualties. Three, what is most worrying is that China does not adhere to the general rules of international law; rather, it tries to derive its claims on the basis of historic rights to the detriment of the rights of its neighbours, as is the case with its claims in the South China Sea.

China's belligerent action and military strategy to acquire territory place Pangong Tso in the category of occupied and disputed territory. In the eyes of international law, occupation is a temporary phenomenon. The Permanent Court of Arbitration's Award in the Island of Palmas case noted that only the continuous and peaceful display of territorial sovereignty (peaceful in relation to



other States) is as good as a title; the title based on contiguity has no standing in international law. India has neither accepted China's unjustified claims on that portion nor its construction activities. Therefore, China cannot take the plea that India has acquiesced; that there is an expression of consent by conduct or inaction by India. In contemporary international law, the most realistic approach to settling a border agreement is to create in each other shared expectations of mutual obligation. What is important is an indication to the other party that a final commitment has been made.

Perhaps the best provisions in contemporary international law for understanding territorial questions are Article 2(3) and Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. All the members are required under Article

2(4) to refrain in their relations with one another from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN. All the members have to settle their disputes by peaceful means.

ICJ judgments

China could take the plea that it is building a bridge peacefully; that it not causing damage to human beings or property. There are several judgments by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) relating to a state's non-violent construction of activities in disputed and occupied territory to clarify the situation in Pangong Tso. In 'Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory', the

ICJ examined the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force. The court took the position that the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory case strongly indicated a breach of Article 2(4). The court observed that the construction of the wall created a "fait accompli" on the ground that could well become permanent, and hence tantamount to a de facto annexation. Therefore, the ICJ seems to have decided in the case that the construction of the wall amounted to the acquisition of territory by force.

The ICJ judgment in 'Certain Activities Carried out by Nicaragua in the Border Area' is also important in understanding China's moves. The court described the construction of caños (pipeline) and deployment of troops in Costa Rica by Nicaragua as a violation of the territorial sovereignty of Costa Rica. It added that Nicaragua's consideration that its activities are within its own territory does not exclude the possibility of characterising the activities as unlawful.

Thus, the fact that China is constructing a bridge on the lake without using armed force or without using fire or causing injury to humans does not make the activity lawful. In the Certain Activities Case, Judge Robinson described Nicaragua's construction activities in Costa Rica as "non-violent use of force". The message from these ICJ judgments is that if a state with the help of its military presence tries to change the status quo peacefully in a disputed and occupied territory, such a move stands to be unlawful.

Anwar Sadat is Senior Assistant Professor in International Law at the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. Views are personal



BOOKS: REVIEW

Decade has just begun, PM Modi far from done, says book

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the template for what it means and what it takes to be a "national leader," Union home minister Amit Shah has said.

While national leaders were identified in the immediate aftermath of the independence movement by their "name recall," the expression came to be abused, notably at the height of the coalition era, Amit Shah said. He alleged that the "Delhi media" had "generously distributed" the status to its "friends and favourites."

Writing in the book "Modi@20 Dreams Meet Delivery", brought out by Rupa Publications and to be launched on May 11, Shah said such "facile and insincere manufacturing of

national leaders" was shown up for what it was after Modi led the BJP to its biggest Lok Sabha win till then in 2014, before repeating the feat with a bigger margin in 2019.

The home minister concluded his chapter, 'Democracy, Delivery and the Politics of Hope' in the book with a warning to his rivals that Modi was far from done. "The decade has just begun. Watch for where it takes Narendra Modi, where Modi takes the BJP, and where the BJP and Modi take India."

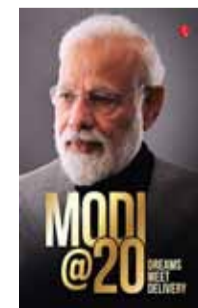
A confidant of the Prime Minister for over three decades, Shah wrote that the best teacher for a leader was travelling to ordinary places, meeting ordinary families, sharing ordinary

"This is very different from the supposed national leaders of other parties. They are fly-in, fly-out visitors with no sense of the ground reality"

experiences and doing all this by ordinary means.

"Modi has done so with greater frequency and perseverance than any politician in the past 75 years," Shah wrote. He said that before the 2014 and the 2019 polls, "there had been no mandate for hope; and no mandate that was simply a reward for tested performance."

He said that no party had won



**MODI@20:
Dreams Meet
Delivery**
By Sudha Murty,
Sadhguru,
Nandan
Nilekani, Amish
Tripathi, Amit
Shah & 19 others
Rupa
Publications
India
458 pages; Rs686

Minister embraced state campaigns, issues and idioms. "He is not just an add-on, or a mascot flown in for a few events and rallies. He complements the deep understanding of local politics and concerns that state BJP units and leaders bring to the table. This is very different from the supposed national leaders of other parties. They are fly-in, fly-out visitors with no sense of the ground reality," Shah said.

He said Modi had the precious gift of personal connection with every state and region, noting that one must go back to his years before 2001 and his Bharat Yatra of that period to understand this. "That tapasya was his real-life university."

Modi's measures as Prime Minister for distributing cooking gas cylinders among households and building toilets as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission stemmed from this understanding, he added.

a majority in the Lok Sabha between 1984 and 2014; between 1952 and 1984 parties had won on the basis of the goodwill of the freedom movement, family legacy, anger against the incumbent (1977), a mix of fear and sympathy (1984) with appeasement, sectional prejudice, vote bank mobilisation and "empty sloganeering like 'Garibi Hatao' of 1971."

"Everybody now recognises that the 2014 polls marked the most decisive shift in the history of Indian politics," Shah wrote. Shah explained that the Prime

Housing sales may dip on likely rise in home loan interest rate

The RBI's decision to hike the benchmark interest rate will make home loans costlier and affect housing sales, especially in affordable and mid-income segments, according to property consultants.

The RBI on Wednesday hiked the key benchmark rate by 50 basis points.

Property consultancy firms Anarock, Knight Frank India, JLL India, Colliers India, India Sotheby's International Realty and Investors Clinic said that the RBI's move was on the expected line to control inflation and this would result in an increase in interest rates on home loans.

Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri said: "The rate hike will push up home loan interest rates, which had already begun creeping upward after the surprise monetary policy announcement last month".

Interest rates will remain



lower than during the global financial crisis of 2008 when they went as high as 12 per cent and above, he said.

"Nevertheless, the current hike will reflect in residential sales volumes in the months to come, more so in the affordable and mid-segments," Puri pointed out.

He noted that the housing market is still largely end-user

he added.

Colliers India CEO Ramesh Nair is expecting banks to gradually pass on this rise in repo rate in the form of higher home loan rates in the coming months.

He advised homebuyers to take advantage of the prevailing home loan rates, with housing prices expected to rise.

Dhruv Agarwal, CEO of Housing.com and PropTiger.com said: "The twin rate hikes by the apex bank would ultimately result in home loan interest rates going up, thereby impacting buyer sentiment".

Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal said home loans are set to get costlier.

"Rising interest rate along with elevated property construction cost and product price pressures could adversely impact the real estate buyer's sentiment," Bajjal felt.

India Sotheby's International

Realty CEO Amit Goyal said he doesn't see any major impact on the demand side in the housing market, which continues to remain strong.

Goyal hoped inflation to cool down by the year-end, enabling the central bank to revert to a lower interest rate regime.

Samantak Das, chief economist, and head of research and REIS, India, JLL, said, "The rise in policy rate is expected to act more as a sentiment disruptor for the home buyers, given that mortgage rates are likely to inch up".

"Affordability remains high and buying momentum is expected to remain largely intact," Das added.

Investors Clinic founder Honey Katiyal said that hike in interest rates will hurt the real estate sector the most. He hoped for a stable interest rate regime.

WCF CyberSmart Empowers Over One Million Learners

WNS Cares Foundation (WCF), the CSR arm of WNS Global Services, today announced that CyberSmart, its cybersafety education portal, has empowered over one million learners since its launch in May 2020.

WCF conducts extensive training for cybersafety awareness through the portal for teachers and principals, who then train children to ensure their safety in cyberspace. Awareness is also created among parents. Schools that complete 85 per cent certifications are awarded a CyberSmart School certificate. University students are engaged through youth social responsibility internship programs to reach out to students and certify them as CyberSmart. WCF volunteers train the teachers in schools, and conduct CyberSmart sessions and portal walkthroughs for students. WCF has collaborated with NGOs and other foundations to spread awareness among their beneficiaries.

Our mission is to empower every child with the knowledge and



confidence required to navigate the online space safely. We are delighted with the wholehearted support that CyberSmart has received in achieving the milestone of certifying one million learners across India. We look forward to pursuing our mission to equip children with the fundamentals of cybersafety, said Keshav R. Muruges, Group CEO, WNS.

I would like to thank all our stakeholders and the partner organizations we have collaborated with over the past two years to

amplify CyberSmart's reach. We will continue to take the cybersafety agenda forward through similar strategic partnerships in the future, said Shomini Muruges, Honorary Chief Mentor, WCF and Creator, CyberSmart.

India's first holistic cybersafety education portal, CyberSmart (cybersmart.wnscaresfoundation.org), enables gamified learning using thematic quiz-based modules based on curriculum advisory and challenges that children encounter in cyberspace.

Infosys Foundation launches four mobile labs in Karnataka



Infosys Foundation, the philanthropic and CSR arm of IT major Infosys, on Monday announced the launch of four mobile laboratories also called 'Lab Built on Wheels' to provide cost-effective diagnostic solutions.

The Foundation had signed an MoU with Rotary Bangalore Southwest Charitable Trust (Rotary Trust), to support with a grant of Rs four crore to make these laboratories. Together with Rotary Trust, it handed the mobile laboratories to the Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

BJPs Vishwajit Rane suspends Congress Michael Lobo's Resorts



BY DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Panjim

The gloves are off and the knives are out in the open. Goa Town and Country Planning (TCP) Minister Vishwajit Rane launched a drive against illegal constructions and sanads in the State on June 9.

Prominent among those affected by Rane's initiative included the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Calangute MLA and Congress leader Michael Lobo, who has been issued showcause notices of illegalities in regard to two of his hotel resorts in the popular Baga area of Calangute in Goa.

Talking to media in Panjim on June 9, the TCP Minister warned that if no correct answers were received in this regard, then Lobo's two resorts would be demolished as both are fit cases for demolition.

Each species has its role in the ecosystem

BY NARVIJAY YADAV

Have you ever noticed that there are very few species of birds that are seen now around us? The number of avian species that we used to witness three-four decades ago has decreased to an alarming level. Many species of birds have disappeared from the urban surroundings completely. One of the major reasons behind this change is the declining number of insects and moths, as a heavy amount of chemical fertilizers and insecticides are used in farming. This trend is seen as a global phenomenon. It is estimated that 75 per cent of insect species have been wiped out from the agriculture fields. These insects and moths used to be the basic food of most birds.

Senco Gold & Diamonds rolls out 'Bangle Utsav 2022'

Senco Gold & Diamonds the largest organized jewellery retailer in Eastern India (based on number of stores), announced the commencement of 'Bangle Utsav 2022'. As part of this offer, customers can choose from exclusive handcrafted jewellery of more than 100 designs in Gold, Diamond and Platinum starting from Rs 19,000. These latest collection of bangles are exquisitely crafted by the skilled karigars, who have been working with Senco Gold & Diamonds for several years.

From traditional heavy gold bangles, to lighter pieces for everyday wear, bangles play an important role in a woman's life. They signify good fortune and prosperity. Bangles, over time have become trendier to suit a more contemporary look, but they are still as significant as they were a millennia ago.

The new offer also brings exquisite contemporary filigree and texture work, handcrafted as well as machine made casting jewellery for its customers. Announcing the launch of



the 'Bangle Utsav 2022', Joita Sen, Director, Senco Gold & Diamonds said, "We are happy to announce Bangle Utsav 2022 for our esteemed customers across India. Bangle Utsav for us is a celebration of womanhood. It's a tribute to the women of today who straddle multiple responsibilities and play a crucial role in shaping our society. We are bringing more than 100 exquisitely handcrafted designs in gold, diamond and platinum. Our endeavor is to adorn their beautiful hands and help them express their personality since these are the hands that care, indulge, decide and believe."

Company is also offering discounts on bangles in Gold, Diamond and Platinum till 19th June

Amazon Launches #FightTheFraud Initiative

Amazon India has collaborated with the CyberPeace Foundation and Knowledge Partner Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) to launch the #FightTheFraud initiative to rally against the increasing cases of online scams.

Aimed to drive awareness to better equip consumers, brands and small businesses on online safety? To dial-up awareness around online scams, Amazon India today announced a one-of-its-kind consumer awareness initiative #FightTheFraud, in collaboration with the CyberPeace Foundation and Rashtriya Raksha University, an Institute of National Importance under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India as a knowledge partner. The initiative intends to develop a collective response against the growing cybercrime and online scams in India through a range of activities such as webinars, social media awareness campaigns, capacity-building workshops, and others.

Maruti Suzuki sets up 20 MWp solar power plant at Manesar plant

Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Monday said it has set up a 20 MWp solar power plant at its Manesar-based manufacturing facility.

The initiative will contribute 28,000 MW per annum, which is equivalent to the energy required for the production of over 67,000 cars annually.

"Harnessing renewable energy is the need of the hour. We are committed to the Government's vision of making India rich in the use of renewable energy sources," MSI Managing Director and CEO Hisashi Takeuchi said in a statement.

The company's efforts are aligned towards encouraging decarbonisation in a bid to bring down emissions, he added.

"Our company has been committed to the cause of expanding the use of sustainable energy options to optimise our operations. The power generation from this initiative will constitute over 11.5 per cent of the power requirement of the facility at Manesar," Takeuchi noted.

MSI said it has been har-



nessing solar energy since 2014 when it installed the first solar power plant of 1 MWp capacity at its Manesar facility, which was later expanded to 1.3 MWp. Taking this initiative ahead, Maruti Suzuki commissioned a 5 MWp carport style photovoltaic solar power plant at its Gurugram facility in 2020.

With the new 20 MWp solar plant at Manesar, the company's combined solar power genera-

tion capacity, across its plants, now stands at 26.3 MWp.

The latest expansion will lead to the avoidance of 20,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year.

The 20 MWp car-port style solar power plant is designed with the lowest area per unit of power generation, using the East-West direction concept, maximising generation using minimum land.

The facility has space to park about 9,000 finished vehicles. A solar carport is an overhead shade designed as a parking area shelter with solar panels mounted on them.

MSI's parent company, Suzuki Motor Corporation, in its mid-term management plan, has prioritised carbon reduction in its products and manufacturing processes.

Aligned to this plan, the country's largest carmaker is also committed to implementing environmentally friendly initiatives for carbon reduction, it stated.

Adani and GMR buy teams in Ultimate Kho Kho



Corporate giants Adani Group and GMR group have acquired the Gujarat and Telangana franchises respectively in the 'Ultimate Kho Kho' league, which is set to start this year with an aim to promote indigenous sport.

The franchise based kho kho league is promoted by Dabur Group chairman Amit Burman in collaboration with Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI).

"Our experience with the Kabaddi and Boxing League gives us confidence that the Ultimate Kho Kho League will do wonders for this much-loved traditional sport," Pranav Adani, Director-Adani Enterprises was quoted as saying in a press release. "Our decision to partner with this league is an extension of our aim to build a world-class ecosystem that nurtures sporting talent, accelerates the sports economy and plays the role of an enabler in India's journey to become a leading sporting nation."

Tata BlueScope Steel launches Durashine Galleria in Ner Chowk (Mandi) Himachal Pradesh

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Mandi

In continuation to our efforts for enhancing customer experience, Tata BlueScope Steel launched DURASHINE Galleria – a unique concept store for all your roofing needs, in the heart of Nerchowk, Mandi, Himachal Pradesh on 8 June 2022. DURASHINE is the retail arm of Tata BlueScope Steel, that manufactures and markets premium roof and wall cladding products including accessories, and solutions. DURASHINE Galleria is a full range dealership under the aegis of the company's



authorised dealer – M/s Naina Industries.

During the launch of the store, Anoop Kumar Trivedi, Managing Director Tata Blue-

Scope Steel said, "Increasing our footprints while getting closer to our customers, is the ultimate objective of setting up these experiential centres across India.

Enabling greater customer centricity through DURASHINE touch points not only reiterates our agility but also brings in novelty for in-store experience."

While speaking on this occasion, CR Kulkarni, Vice President - Solution Business, Tata BlueScope Steel said, "This flagship store offers integrated communication for the brand, displaying complete range of key products in vibrant colour durability. With great weatherability, structural strength and ambient interiors through its innovative solutions, DURASHINE is all set to spread its value within the HP market.

DURASHINE Galleria will fulfil the need for anyone looking for amazing aesthetics, excellent thermal efficiency, and exemplary colour durability. With great weatherability, structural strength and ambient interiors through its innovative solutions, DURASHINE is all set to spread its value within the HP market.

interactive zones in engaging formats for overall customer involvement. Today customers are more discerning and demand product experience before purchase decision, and this is a great avenue for ensuring they make the right choice."

NCLAT stays insolvency proceedings against RHC Holding

NEW DELHI: The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has stayed the insolvency proceedings against RHC Holding, an entity promoted by former promoters of erstwhile Ranbaxy and Fortis Healthcare.

RHC Holding is promoted by brothers -- Shivinder Singh and Malvinder Singh.

A two-member NCLAT bench had admitted an appeal filed by Daiichi Sankyo against an order passed by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) directing initiating the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against RHC Holding.

The New Delhi bench of NCLT, on May 13, had passed the order against RHC Holding over a plea filed by its financial creditor Religare Comtrade Ltd.

The NCLAT said submissions raised by counsel for the parties "need consideration" and issued notices, directing them to file their replies within three weeks.

The appellate tribunal has directed to list Daiichi Sankyo's appeal on July 20 for the next hearing.



"In the meantime, the impugned order dated May 13, 2022 (by NCLT) shall remain stayed," the NCLAT said in its interim order on June 3.

Daiichi Sankyo in its appeal said there was an award passed by a tribunal in Singapore on April 29, 2016. As per the award, RHC Holding as well as other companies had to make payments to the Japanese company.

On January 31, 2018, the Delhi High Court upheld the Rs 3,500 crore arbitral award passed in the favour of Daiichi Sankyo and paved the way for enforcement of the 2016 tribu-

nal award against the brothers who had sold their shares in Ranbaxy to Daiichi in 2008 for Rs 9,576.1 crore. Later, Sun Pharmaceuticals Ltd acquired Ranbaxy from Daiichi Sankyo.

Daiichi Sankyo submitted before the NCLAT that Religare Comtrade Ltd had filed an application under Section 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) to initiate CIRP against RHC Holding.

According to the Japanese company, the applicant along with other concerns has filed 23 insolvency proceedings against different entities to defeat its

claim and that the Supreme Court of India had passed an interim order on April 5, 2019, in the matter.

The Supreme Court had stayed all proceedings before the NCLT filed under Section 7, whereby all 23 proceedings, including the proceedings initiated by the Religare Comtrade Ltd, were also stayed, as per Daiichi Sankyo.

"It is submitted that the Section 7 application filed in March 2022 was another attempt to bail out the corporate debtor (RHC Holding) from its liability and it is submitted that in the proceedings under Section 7, the corporate debtor neither appeared nor contested the proceedings whereas the adjudicating authority has admitted the application," Daiichi Sankyo told the NCLAT.

Moreover, the copy of the Supreme Court order dated April 5, 2019 "has not been referred in the application under Section 7, rather in one of the paragraphs, it was mentioned that Section 7 application was filed by the applicant but no further details were given," the Japanese drug

major said. "From the perusal of the impugned order it does not indicate that adjudicating authority (NCLT) was made aware of the order of the Supreme Court dated April 5, 2019," Daiichi Sankyo said.

Senior Counsel Amit Sibal appearing on behalf of Religare Comtrade Ltd submitted that since a loan of Rs 99 crore was given to RHC Holding and the limitation was to runout, hence, it had no option except to file the application to save the limitation. Further, he submitted that the "applicant (Daiichi) has itself taken action against the RHC holding and the application under Section 7 has been filed for recovering its dues".

The NCLAT, while passing the interim order, said it has considered the submissions of the counsels from both sides and perused the record. Referring to the order passed by the Supreme Court on April 5, 2019, the NCLAT said, "perusal of the order indicates the Religare Comtrade Limited also had filed an application under Section 7 and was one of the parties whose Section 7 application stayed."

Exprto raises Rs 5 crores in seed funding from GSF, Angel List USA, Agility Ventures and others

NEW DELHI: Exprto, India's largest experience-sharing and mentorship network for students, has raised Rs 5 crores in a seed round led by GSF and Angel List USA; it also had Agility Ventures, Lets Venture, and Supermorpheus participating in it. Agility Ventures is a start-up investing platform that shares a passion for nurturing and investing in early-stage businesses and technology that are transforming the supply chain. The funding-round also saw unicorn founders and angel investors participating in it, which included Rishabh Karwa (GoMechanic), Rahul Jainini (Swiggy), Sanka Aravind (Rapido), Rajesh Yabaji (Blackbuck), Vikas Bagaria (Pee Safe), Rahul Maroli (Zee5), Nitish MitterSain (Nazara Technologies), Dinesh Gulati (India Mart), Deep Gupta, Sahil Mahaldar and Archana Priyadarshini among others.

Varun Richharia, co-founder of Exprto, stated that the edtech start-up is going after the big whitespace opportunity which is untapped in India.

He added, "The total market opportunity for 'Mentorship as a Service' (MAAS) in India alone is \$11 billion, with \$6 billion in the test prep segment only. That's where we will create coalescence and a massive success network within the Indian student community. The evolution of Exprto continues to build on the belief that every mentor's voice can transform and accelerate people's career immensely, and our platform provides them with an entirely new, accessible and engaging way to do so".

The company offers mentorship services that vary in duration between 1 to 12 months range. Currently the platform offers 1-on-1 as well as cohort-based group mentorship sessions. Based on the stage of preparation that the aspirants are at, each service is personalised using their proprietary AI/ML profile-matching tech.

Rajan Chaudhary, co-founder of Exprto, feels that the company's business model fills the gap of mentorship issues in the student community. He explained, "The Indian edtech market is primarily focused on opportunities for better teaching methodology and academic content. Despite the real advantages that such platforms have brought to students, they still struggle to achieve their exam-related objectives. These include strategies for preparation, revision, and guidance that they mostly get from senior students or from online platforms like Quora/YouTube. There is no structured approach to address the mentorship issue, but there is a clear evidence of a large market gap and the stakes are very real."

Exprto, in the last eight months, has seen a staggering increase in gross merchandise value (GMV) of more than 23X, as well as over 18X growth in sessions of over 1 million+ minutes of mentorship. It now plans to refine the overall product and accelerate its growth by building a stronger team and technology with the newly-acquired funds. Product offerings will also be launched for the new market segments.



RBI retains growth projection at 7.2 per cent for FY23

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday retained its growth projection at 7.2 % for the current fiscal on the back of improvement in urban demand and gradual recovery in rural India.

Unveiling the third monetary policy for the current fiscal, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Indian economy remained resilient, and the central bank will continue to support growth.

The RBI expects growth in the first quarter of the current fiscal at 16.2 %, which will taper to 4 per cent by the fourth quarter. He, however, cautioned that there are risks from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

The central bank earlier in April slashed the GDP growth projection for 2022-23 to 7.2 per cent from its earlier forecast of 7.8 per cent.

On Tuesday, the World Bank cut India's economic growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.5 per cent as rising inflation, supply chain disruptions,



and geopolitical tensions taper recovery. It was the second time that the World Bank has revised its GDP growth forecast for India in the current fiscal 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023). In April, it trimmed the forecast from 8.7 per cent to 8

per cent and now it is projected at 7.5 per cent.

The GDP growth compares to an 8.7 per cent expansion in the previous 2021-22 fiscal.

India's economy grew by 4.1 per cent in the January-March quarter of 2021-22.

RBI hikes interest rate by 50 bps to tame inflation

FW DESK

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday raised the interest rate by 50 basis points to a two-year high of 4.9 % as it doubled down to tame inflation that has surged in the last couple of months.

The rate hike comes on the back of a 40 bps increase effected by RBI at an unscheduled meeting on May 4. All the six members of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, unanimously voted for the latest rate hike. Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation, which RBI factors in while arriving at its monetary policy, galloped for the seventh straight month to touch an 8-year high of 7.79 % in April.

Das said the new arrangement is expected to provide

RBI allows credit cards to be linked with UPI platform

The Reserve Bank on Wednesday allowed credit cards to be linked with the unified payments interface (UPI), which will enable more people to make payments using the popular platform.

At present, UPI facilitates transactions by linking savings or current accounts through users' debit cards.

“It is proposed to allow linking of credit cards to UPI,” RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the regulatory moves, along with the bi-monthly policy review.

He said that to start with Rupay credit cards issued by the RBI-promoted National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) will be enabled with this facility, and the facility will be made available after system developments.

Das said the new arrangement is expected to provide



more avenues and convenience to the customers in making payments through the UPI platform.

UPI has become the most inclusive mode of payment in India, with over 26 crore unique users and 5 crore merchants onboarded on the platform, he added.

In May, 594.63 crore transactions amounting to Rs 10.40 lakh crore were processed through UPI, Das said.

The interoperability of pre-paid payment instruments (PPIs) has also facilitated access of PPIs to the UPI payment system for undertaking transactions, Das said.

RBI's repo hike rate well-reasoned, says ASSOCHAM President

FW DESK

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) move to raise policy interest rates by another 50 bps within a short timeframe will help the Indian economy in the medium term, said ASSOCHAM President Sumant Sinha.

He said that a through a clearly well-coordinated approach between the RBI and Finance Ministry, Indian government and monetary policymakers have managed the challenging global environment with foresight and calmness.

Inflation, though a concern, is still within relatively manageable limits, especially when compared to many parts of the world.

“It is understandable that there is concern about the rate hikes resulting in higher EMIs, but, in the longer run, the resulting price stability will play a crucial role in supporting rising demand, which is key,” Sinha said.

Sinha added the RBI will have to continue to work closely with the government and other stakeholders such as India Inc. to ensure the robust pace of the economic recovery coming out of the pandemic's third wave is sustained, in a higher interest rate environment.

“The tamping down of inflation is critical to sustain the economy's robust growth momentum, especially given continued global challenges including high energy and food costs,” he pointed out. “All in all, the RBI's move is necessary and well-reasoned, given the current macro-economic currents,” the Assocham president stated. On fintech, the ASSOCHAM President stated that the government's move to link credit card payments with UPI brings in greater “convergence” to banks, credit authorities, and in fact, the entire fintech ecosystem, building greater financial inclusion.

He also lauded the critical role that the RBI is playing in leveraging the benefits of UPI to medium and small-scale enterprises (MSMEs).



Monetary, fiscal authorities taking steps to moderate inflation, push growth: DEA Secretary

NEW DELHI: Monetary and fiscal authorities are taking steps to moderate inflation and push growth, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) Secretary Ajay Seth said on Wednesday.

His comments came in the backdrop of Reserve Bank of

India (RBI) hiking key interest rate by 50 basis points to tame inflation. The central bank also upped inflation projection to 6.7 per cent while maintaining growth estimate at 7.2 per cent for the current fiscal.

“There are domestic chal-

enges and larger ones are

there in the global scenario. Whatever it takes for monetary and fiscal authorities, those actions are being taken. We (are working) to moderate the inflation (and) at the same time keep the growth efforts as earlier,” Seth told reporters.

He was responding to questions on RBI decision on the interest rate front.

Seth said that apart from growth and inflation, the authorities are also working on management of rupee and keeping fiscal balance. Both monetary and fiscal authori-

ties are working towards that goal, he added.

“There cannot be any copy book solution. As new information emerge, they are analysed and whatever it takes to meet those challenges those measures will be taken,” he added.

RBI monetary policy highlights

Following are the highlights of RBI's third monetary policy review of the current financial year announced by Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday

parts considerable uncertainty to domestic inflation outlook

□ GDP growth forecast retained at 7.2 pc for current financial year

□ Economic activity gathering strength; normal monsoon to boost rural consumption

□ Credit cards to be linked with UPI; RuPay credit cards to be linked first

□ Lending limits for housing loans by co-op banks doubled

□ Rural co-op banks permitted to lend to commercial Real Estate - Residential Housing (CRE-RH) sector

□ Urban Co-op banks allowed to offer door-step banking

□ e-mandates on cards for recurring payments enhanced to Rs 15,000 from Rs 5,000.

Modi launches new series of coins with AKAM design

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday launched a special series of coins that are also visually impaired friendly.

The coins of Re 1, Rs 2, 5, 10 and 20 denominations will have the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) design are not commemorative coins and will be part of circulation. “These new series of coins will remind people of the goal of amrit kal and motivate people to work towards the development of the country,” Modi said while addressing the iconic week celebration of the Ministry of Finance.

Modi also launched the ‘Jan



Samarth portal’ – a credit-linked portal of 12 government schemes. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said each of these schemes will be displayed on the portal. “This portal is going to make it easy so that citizens does not have to ask the same questions every time to avail himself a government programme”.

Need to make Indian banks, currency important part of int'l trade, supply chain, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday stressed the need to make India's banks and currency an important part of the international trade and supply chain.

The Prime Minister also exhorted financial institutions to continuously encourage good financial and corporate governance practices. Inaugurating the iconic week celebrations by the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Affairs as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Ma-



hatsav, Modi said India has developed various financial inclusion platforms and there is a need to create aware-

ness about them for their optimum utilisation.

“There should be an effort to extend these financial inclusion solutions globally.”

Modi also launched the ‘Jan Samarth portal’, a credit-linked portal of 12 government schemes, to ensure ease in credit availability to youth, entrepreneurs and farmers.

The Jan Samarth portal will be an ‘end-to-end delivery platform’, and more people will come forward to avail loans, he said.

In his address, the Prime

Minister said: “It is necessary to focus on how to make our domestic banks, currency an important part of international supply chain and trade”.

Modi said people-centric governance and continuous effort toward good governance have been the hallmark of the government in the past 8 years.

He also said that permanent dwelling, electricity, gas, water and free treatment have given poor respect they deserve.

Unavoidable rate hike by RBI to lend support to financial/macro stability: ASSOCHAM



NEW DELHI: The decision of the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee to raise the benchmark REPO rate by 50 basis points to 4.9 per cent is largely on the expected lines and seemed unavoidable, given the challenging global economic and geo-political situation marked by ultra inflation and supply disruptions aggravated by the Ukraine-Russia war, said the apex industry chamber ASSOCHAM.

“While the MPC has decided to withdraw the accommodative stance to rein in inflation, it also remains cognizant of the growth imperatives of the economy, retaining the policy rate below the pre-pandemic level,” said ASSOCHAM Secretary General Deepak Sood.

He said the ASSOCHAM would support the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das' suggestion that further reduction in State VATs on petrol and diesel across the country can contribute to softening of the inflationary pressures as well as expectations. This would follow the supply side measures by the Centre by way of reduction in excise on petrol and diesel along with other duty rationalisation measures on different commodities. The chamber noted several positives highlighted by the RBI's policy statement including rising capacity utilisation in manufacturing, deleveraging of corporate balance sheets, improvement in invest activity helped by government's capex push and increasing growth in the bank credit.

HDFC Bank hikes lending rates by 0.35%, 2nd hike in two months

MUMBAI: The country's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank on Tuesday announced a 0.35 per cent hike in lending rate.

The hike, which comes a day ahead of the RBI's scheduled policy review, is the second such move from the lender in as many months, taking the cumulative hike to up to 0.60 per cent.

The RBI had surprised all with a 0.40 per cent hike in key interest rates on May 4 to tame the inflation situation and is widely expected to follow up with further tightening of the policy on Wednesday.

HDFC Bank increased its Marginal Cost of funding based Lending Rate by 0.35 per cent from June 7, as per the new rate structure published on its website. The one-year MCLR, on which a bulk of consumer loans are pegged,



will be 7.85 per cent after the newest review as against 7.50 per cent earlier.

The overnight MCLR will be 7.50 per cent against 7.15 per cent, while the three-year MCLR will be 8.05 per cent compared to 7.70 per cent.

It can be noted that the rate hikes come at a time when credit growth is not very high and banks are keen to accelerate on the same. There have been hikes in deposit rates as well, which have preceded the lending rate hikes, along with the change in the policy environment.

Regulators should be well advanced to deal with digitisation: Sitharaman

NEW DELHI: Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said regulators and other entities should be well advanced and ahead of the curve in understanding digitisation to ensure that there is no misuse of technologies.

Sitharaman, who is in charge of finance and corporate affairs ministries, also emphasised the need to have firewall mechanisms in the context of digitisation.

The decade from 2020 and upwards will be infused with digital methods, she added.

Sitharaman was speaking at the event to flag off Iconic Day celebrations of the corporate affairs ministry as part of the AzadiKaAmritMahotsav (AKAM).

According to her, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and National Financial



Reporting Authority (NFRA) should be ahead of the curve in the context of digitisation to ensure fair and accountable practices as well as there is no misuse of technologies.

Corporate Affairs Secretary Rajesh Verma said the ministry will be coming out with various tools, including for compliance management, and emphasised its focus on

technology-driven platforms to facilitate ease of doing business.

Various measures have been taken in the last eight years to ease the compliance burden, he noted. Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh also addressed the event.

At the event, the National CSR Exchange Portal was launched.

Automobile retail sales in slow lane in May: FADA

Retail sales of passenger vehicles grew last month but the sales of two-wheeler and commercial vehicles remained low compared to the pre-COVID month of May 2019, according to automobile dealers' body FADA.

On Monday, FADA said that overall auto retails stood at 16,46,773 units in May, down from 18,22,900 units in May 2019. “May 2022 retails when compared to May 2019 reveal that sales are still not on growth trajectory as overall retails were down by 10 per cent. While PV and tractors continued its positive run... two-wheeler, three-wheeler and CV sales are yet to show any signs of healthy run-rate,” Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Vinkesh Gulati said in a statement.

While Year-on-Year (Y-o-



Y) comparison with May 2021 shows exceptionally healthy growth rate across all categories, it is important to note that both May 2021 and May 2020 were affected by nationwide lockdown due to the COVID pandemic, he stated.

According to him, a better comparison will be with May

2019 which was a normal pre-COVID month. Last month, the Passenger Vehicle (PV) retail sales stood at 2,63,152 units. This was 11 per cent higher compared to 2,36,215 units sold in May 2019. The retails in COVID-hit May 2021 and May 2020 stood at 86,479 units and 31,951 units, respectively.

“The PV segment which has already surpassed May 2019 numbers is witnessing huge demand. Dealers are not able to fulfil the same due to supply side issues,” he said, adding that this has led to an increase in waiting period ranging from three months to two years.

“Healthy booking and single digit cancellation shows that demand may stay put even when normal supply resumes in months to come,” Gulati noted. Last month, two-wheeler sales stood at 12,22,994 units. It was at 4,10,871 units in May last year. In May 2019, the two-wheeler retails stood at 14,20,563 units. “The two-wheeler segment has seen slight improvement in overall sales when compared with April this year,” Gulati said. While the electric two-wheeler

sales were growing rapidly, the fire incidents across almost all brands, has created a fear in the mind of the customer, he stated. “This coupled with supply chain issues, has decreased two-wheeler EV sales drastically from last month,” Gulati said.

The commercial vehicle sales stood at 66,632 units last month, up from 17,607 units in May last year. It, however, remained low as compared to 75,238 units in May 2019.

Similarly, three-wheeler sales remained muted last month at 41,508 compared with 51,446 units in May 2019. In May last year, the retail sales stood at 5,215 units. However, tractor sales were up last month at 52,487 units from 39,438 units in May 2019.

Markets recover after initial decline post RBI policy



MUMBAI: Benchmark indices pared early losses, with the Sensex jumping 317 points in morning trade on Wednesday, after the RBI retained its growth projection at 7.2 per cent for current fiscal year on the back of improvement in urban demand and gradual recovery in rural India.

The 30-share BSE benchmark rallied 316.63 points to 55,423.97 in morning trade. The broader NSE Nifty was trading with a gain of 97.95 points at 16,514.30.

Unveiling the third monetary policy for 2022-23, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Indian economy remained resilient, and the central bank will continue to support growth.

RBI on Wednesday raised the interest rate by 50 basis points to a two-year high of 4.9 per cent as it doubled down to tame inflation that has surged in the last couple of months. The rate hike comes on the back of a 40 basis points increase effected by RBI at an unscheduled meeting on May 4.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Steel, NTPC, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the major gainers.

In contrast, Reliance Industries, BhartiAirtel, Nestle, Asian Paints, HUL and ITC were among the laggards.

“RBI's projections of GDP growth rate of 7.2 per cent and inflation of 6.7 per cent for FY23 reflect a realistic monetary policy. The higher inflation projection indicates that the central bank recognises the seriousness of inflation and the 50 bps repo rate hike is a message that they are determined to anchor inflation expectations.

“The Governor's remark that the economy remains resilient and recovery has gathered momentum, is bullish from the market perspective,” said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong were trading in the green, while Shanghai quoted lower.

Stock markets in the US had ended with gains on Tuesday. “In line with the expectation, RBI has increased the repo rate by 50 basis points and is already discounted by the market,” said Ravi Singh, Vice President and Head of Research, Share India. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 0.34 per cent to USD 120.97 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth Rs 2,293.98 crore on Tuesday, according to stock exchange data.

Sri Lankan Cabinet set to discuss 21st Amendment to the Constitution



Sri Lanka's Cabinet is set to discuss on Monday the 21st Amendment to the Constitution to empower Parliament over the executive president.

The 21st Amendment is expected to annul the 20A to the Constitution which gives unfettered powers to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa after abolishing the 19th Amendment.

The draft of the proposed amendment will be presented at Monday's Cabinet meeting, constitutional affairs minister Wijedasa Rajapaksa told reporters. It will be discussed today (on Monday) and if approved could be sent to the legal draftsman within 2-3 days for finalisation, he said.

He said most of the changes suggested by political parties in

the draft during a meeting held on Friday have been included.

The government announced on Friday that most of the concerns raised by parties had been addressed and agreed upon. However, the main Opposition party, Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), expressed disagreement, saying the government needed to wait until the Supreme Court's determination on the amendment. The SJB has accused the government of watering down the amendment to allow president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to continue enjoying full powers.

The SJB is pressing for the abolition of the presidential system. The powerful Rajapaksa family tightened their grip

on power after their massive victory in the general elections in August 2020, which allowed them to amend the Constitution to restore presidential powers and install close family members in key positions. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe last week battled for the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, saying it will curb the president's unlimited powers while enhancing the role of Parliament in governing the debt-ridden country which is also facing an unprecedented political turmoil.

His proposal to introduce the 21st Amendment met with stiff resistance from some members of the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party. They charged that Wickremesinghe was looking to garner more power for himself while weakening President Rajapaksa who appointed him. Wickremesinghe was the main sponsor of the 19th Amendment in 2015 which empowered Parliament over the executive president.

The constitutional reform was a major plank of the agreement between Rajapaksa and Wickremesinghe when he took over the job of prime minister on May 12.

Sri Lanka PM Wickremesinghe hints at opting for fuel rationing amid economic crisis

The next three weeks are going to be "tough" for Sri Lanka over fuel supplies, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe warned on Tuesday, indicating that the cash-strapped country, which needs some USD 3,300 million for fuel imports in the next six months, may opt for its rationing.

Addressing Parliament, Wickremesinghe said that India, China and Japan are leading the list of countries that provided Sri Lanka with loans and assistance during the worst financial crisis faced by the island nation.

Relations with these countries, which have always been strong, are now broken. Those relationships need to be rebuilt," he said. "The country spends USD 500 million per month on fuel. It should be kept in mind that the current global crisis risks raising oil prices. Some estimate that global oil prices will rise by as much as 40 per cent by the end of this year."

"In this context, the idea of introducing a coupon system for fuel cannot be ruled out. Somehow we have to find USD 3,300 million for fuel for the next six months," he said.

The next three weeks will be a tough time for us related



to fuel. It is time we all must use fuel and gas as carefully as possible. Unessential travel should be limited as much as possible. After these difficult three weeks, we are trying to ensure the shortage of fuel and gas will have ended. Let's face these difficult three weeks united and patiently, the prime minister said.

Wickremesinghe said although the primary focus was on achieving economic stability, the effort must be to revive the economy. This is not something that can be done in two or three days. This challenge cannot be faced by miracles, slogans, magic or emotions. Implementing intelligently thought-out projects requires hard work and dedication," he said.

On cooking gas queues, Wick-

remesinghe said it costs USD 40 million a month to import gas.

We are currently using multilateral assistance, local currency and Indian loans to import gas. We will require USD 250 million over the next six months for gas," he said. Wickremesinghe said the country's annual rice requirement is 2.5 million metric tonnes. But we have only 1.6 million metric tonnes of rice in stock, we need USD 5 billion to ensure our daily lives are not disrupted for the next six months," he said. "We need to strengthen the rupee in line with the daily requirements of the citizens. Another USD 1 billion is needed to strengthen the rupee. That means we need to find USD 6 billion to keep the country afloat for the next six months," he said.

US stresses allied cooperation in face of N Korea threats

US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman met with her counterparts from South Korea and Japan on Wednesday, emphasising the US commitment to defend its allies and trilateral security cooperation to confront an accelerating nuclear threat from North Korea.

The latest top-level meetings between the countries came as North Korea apparently presses ahead with preparations for its first nuclear test explosion in nearly five years, which US officials say could occur in the coming days. After a meeting in Seoul, Sherman and the South Korean and Japanese vice foreign ministers issued a joint statement condemning North Korea's provocative streak in weapons demonstrations this year and pledging closer security cooperation to curb the growing threats. The statement said Sherman reaffirmed steadfast US commitments to the defense of South Korea and Japan, including extended deterrence, referring to an assurance to defend its allies with its full military capabilities, including nuclear. The United States, the Republic of Korea and Japan are fully and closely aligned on the DPRK, Sherman said in a news conference, using the initials of North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Sherman noted that North Korea since last September has significantly increased the pace and scale of its ballistic launches, posing a serious threat to security in the region and beyond, and urged Pyongyang to cease taking these provocative and destabilizing actions and to commit to the path of diplomacy. Jolting an old pattern of brinkmanship, North Korea has already set an annual record in ballistic launches through the first six months of 2022, firing 31 missiles over 18 test events, including its first demonstrations of intercontinental ballistic missiles since 2017.



capital, Tehran. Rescue teams with ambulances and helicopters had arrived in the remote area where communication is poor. Over a dozen people suffered critical injuries, with some transferred to local hospitals, officials said. Iranian media quoted the governor of Tabas, Ali Akbar Rahimi, as saying the crash killed at least 17 people and that the number of fatalities may rise as rescuers search the train cars.

Rajnath hands over 12 high-speed guard boats to Vietnam



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday handed over to Vietnam 12 high-speed guard boats built under a USD 100 million Line of Credit granted to the Southeast Asian country by India.

The boats were given by Singh at a ceremony in the Hong Ha shipyard amid increasing maritime security cooperation between the two sides to deal with Beijing's increasing military assertiveness in the South China Sea region. The defence

minister is on a three-day visit to Vietnam from June 8 to 10.

"It gives me great pleasure to join this historic ceremony marking the successful completion of the project to build 12 high-speed guard boats under the USD 100 million defence Line of Credit by India," he said at the event.

The initial five boats were manufactured at the L&T Shipyard in India and the remaining seven were built in the Hong Ha shipyard. "I am confident that this will be a precursor to many more cooperative defence projects between India and Vietnam," Singh said. "This project is a glowing example of our 'Make in India -- Make for the World' mission," he added.

The defence minister said India would be "greatly pleased" if "close friends like Vietnam" become part of the country's transformation in the defence manufacturing sector.

Putin blames West for food, energy crises



Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday blamed the West for emerging global food and energy crises and repeated his government's offers of safe passage for ships exporting grain from Ukraine if mines are removed from the waters.

Of course, we are now seeing attempts to shift the responsibility for what is happening on the world food market, the emerging problems in this market, onto Russia, he told Russian TV. I must say that this is an attempt, as our people say, to shift these problems from a sick to a healthy head.

As reported by the state-run Tass news agency, Putin also said Western sanctions against Russia would only worsen world markets reducing the harvest and driving up prices.

He said inflation stemmed from the unprecedented dollar printing press during the coronavirus pandemic and blamed short-sighted European policies for under-investment in alternatives to traditional energy supplies and price increases.

The Kremlin leader said Russia wasn't blocking grain shipments from Ukraine and that the West is using Russia as a scapegoat for its problems.

Putin pledged that if the waters were demined, Russia wouldn't attack grain shipments and suggested they could be made from the Ukrainian port of Berdyansk or other countries, such as Belarus. Berdyansk is under Russian occupation.

India, Vietnam decide to expand defence & security ties

India and Vietnam on Wednesday inked a vision document to further broad-base the scope and scale of bilateral defence cooperation after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held "fruitful" talks with his Vietnamese counterpart General Phan Van Giang.

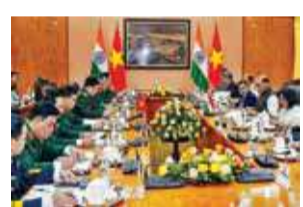
The defence minister arrived in Vietnam on Tuesday on a three-day visit.

"Had an excellent meeting with General Phan Van Giang, the Defence Minister of Vietnam. We renewed interactions on expanding bilateral cooperation. Our close Defence and Security cooperation is an important factor of stability in the Indo-Pacific region," Singh tweeted.

The joint vision document provides for significant expansion of defence ties in diverse areas by 2030, officials said.

"We had wide-ranging discussions on effective and practical initiatives to further expand bilateral Defence engagements and regional and global issues," Singh said.

"After our fruitful deliberations, we signed the Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership towards



2030, which will significantly enhance the scope and scale of our defence cooperation," he added.

The signing of the vision document to expand bilateral defence and security ties came amid growing congruence between the two countries in the maritime security domain amid China's increasing muscle-flexing in the region.

Singh is also scheduled to call on Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh.

Vietnam, an important country of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), has territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea region.

India has oil exploration projects in the Vietnamese waters in the South China Sea. India and Vietnam are boosting their maritime security cooperation in the last few years to protect common interests.

Train derailment in east Iran kills at least 17

A passenger train partially derailed in eastern Iran early Wednesday, killing at least 17 people and injuring 50 more, including some critically, authorities said.

The report said the number of casualties could rise, though initial details about the disaster involving a train reportedly carrying some 350 passengers remained unclear. Four of the seven cars in the train derailed



in the early morning darkness near the desert city of Tabas, Iranian state television reported. Tabas is some 550 kilometers (340 miles) southeast of the

capital, Tehran. Rescue teams with ambulances and helicopters had arrived in the remote area where communication is poor. Over a dozen people suffered critical injuries, with some transferred to local hospitals, officials said. Iranian media quoted the governor of Tabas, Ali Akbar Rahimi, as saying the crash killed at least 17 people and that the number of fatalities may rise as rescuers search the train cars.

Japan criticises Russia for suspending fishing pact

Japan on Wednesday criticised Russia's announcement suspending an agreement that allows Japanese to fish in waters near disputed islands, as relations between the countries deteriorate over the war in Ukraine.

The fishing deal has been in place since 1998, allowing Japanese fishing boats to operate around the Russian-held Kurils, which Japan also claims and calls the Northern Territories, in exchange for Japan's payment based on catch quota and other conditions negotiated annually.

Its suspension, apparently in response to Japan's sanctions against Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine, raises concern about

NASA to launch 3 rockets from private Australian space port



NASA will launch a research rocket from remote northern Australia this month in the agency's first blast off from a commercial space port outside the United States. Three suborbital sounding rockets will be launched from the Arnhem Space Center on Indigenous-owned land near the mining town of Nhulunby in the Northern Territory on June 26, July 4 and 12, said NASA and the launch pad's owner, Equatorial Launch Australia. The launch site was chosen because it is in the Southern Hemisphere and close to the equator. This commercial launch range in Australia opens up new access to the Southern Hemisphere's night sky, expanding the possibilities for future science missions, NASA associate administrator for the Science Mission Directorate Thomas Zurbuchen said in a statement.

the safety of Japanese fishing boats in the area. Prior to the agreement, Russian authorities had seized and shot at Japanese boats. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said it was "regrettable that Russia one-sidedly announced suspending the cooperation in this manner. He criticised Moscow for blaming Japan's failure to fund unrelated development projects on Sakhalin, the largest Russian island in the Pacific.

Putin warns West against sending arms, Kyiv hit by missiles

Russian President Vladimir Putin's new warning to the West against sending longer-range rocket systems to Ukraine came as his forces claimed to have destroyed Western military supplies in their first such airstrikes on Ukraine's capital in more than a month.

The attack showed that Russia still had the capability and willingness to hit at Ukraine's heart, despite refocusing its efforts to capture territory in the east. Putin's comments, in a TV interview that aired Sunday, came days after the U.S. announced plans to deliver 700 million of security assistance for Ukraine, including four precision-guided, medium-range rocket systems, as well as



helicopters, Javelin anti-tank systems, radars, tactical vehicles and more.

All this fuss around additional deliveries of weapons, in my opinion, has only one goal: to drag out the armed conflict as much as possible, Putin said. He insisted such supplies were unlikely to change the military situation for Ukraine's government, which he said was merely making up for losses of similar rockets.

US official vows 'forceful response' if North Korea tests nuke

US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on Tuesday warned of a forceful response if North Korea carries out its first nuclear test explosion in nearly five years as she travelled to Seoul to meet with South Korean and Japanese allies and discuss the escalating standoff.

US and South Korean officials have said North Korea is all but ready to conduct another detonation at its nuclear testing ground in the northeastern town of Punggye-ri, which last hosted a test in September 2017, when it claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear bomb designed for its intercontinental ballistic missiles.

While the Biden administration has vowed to push for additional international sanctions if North Korea goes on with the nuclear test, the prospects for meaningful new punitive measures are unclear with the United Nations Security Council divided over Russia's war on Ukraine.

Any nuclear test would be in complete violation of UN Security Council resolutions. There would be a swift and forceful response

Australian leader's visit affirms deeper ties to Indonesia

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Monday looked to move beyond regional issues that have been a key part of his trips abroad by promoting the importance of building stronger economic ties with neighboring Indonesia.

The visit was only Albanese's second overseas trip since his



inauguration two weeks ago and underscores the importance that Australia places on

its sometimes fractious relationship with Indonesia, its closest major neighbor.

Albanese talked about the importance of expanding the two countries' trade and investment relationship, highlighting their ambition to better utilize the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Russia draws closer to capture of Ukraine's Donbas region



Russia drew closer to its goal of fully capturing Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of coal mines and factories as the Kremlin claimed to have taken control of 97 per cent of one of the two provinces that make up the Donbas region.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday that Moscow's forces hold nearly all of Luhansk province. And it appears that Russia now occupies roughly half of Donetsk province, according to Ukrainian officials and military analysts.

After abandoning its bungled attempt to storm Kyiv two months ago, Russia declared that taking the entire Donbas is its main objective. Moscow-backed separatists have been battling Ukrainian government forces in the Donbas since 2014, and the region has borne the brunt of the Russian onslaught in recent weeks.

Early in the war, Russian troops also took control of the entire Kherson region and a large part of the Zaporizhzhia region, both in the south. Russian officials and their local appointees have talked about plans for those regions to either declare their independence or be folded into Russia.

78th Staff Course commences in DSSC, Wellington



The Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) in nearby Wellington on Monday commenced the 78th Staff Course, which would train over 400 student officers from India and some foreign countries. The course consists of 439 officers of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as officers from the allied services of Ministry of Defence and 39 officers from friendly foreign countries.

Nestled in the verdant Nilgiris, DSSC is the premier tri-services institute of the country that functions under the HQ Integrated Defence Staff and trains middle-level officers of all three services on multifarious command and staff responsibilities over 11 months. On successful completion of the course, students are awarded an MSc degree in Defence and Strategic Studies by the University of Madras, an official release said.

Boris Johnson wins no-confidence' vote, but the margin will make him nervous

York, Jun 7 (The Conversation) Boris Johnson has survived a no-confidence vote by 211 votes to 148 votes against his leadership. But Johnson's margin of victory is smaller (as a percentage of all Conservative MPs) than that achieved by his predecessor Theresa May in 2019, six months before she resigned and he won the support of the majority of the Conservative Party and took office. Now, after weeks of speculation during the partygate scandal, 40% of his MPs have attempted to vote him out of power.

The no-confidence vote was triggered after 54 (or possibly more) MPs submitted letters to Sir Graham Brady, the chairman of the influential 1922 committee, saying they no longer believed Johnson is the right person to lead the party.

The 148 votes against Johnson means that for the first time the public, and the rebels, know the scale of the opposition Johnson now faces. This figure



for has this evening virtually trebled from the 54 needed to instigate a leadership contest to 148 who were willing to vote to change leader. Although not yet sufficient to topple Johnson, it is far from the decisive victory Johnson will wish to present this as and could yet galvanise more calls for him to resign.

The contest was a straightforward yes or no vote. To win the vote, Johnson needed a simple majority of the ballots to be returned in his favour. All of the 369 Conservative MPs took part

and Johnson has managed to hold on to the majority. Under the party's current rules, he will not face another such vote for 12 months.

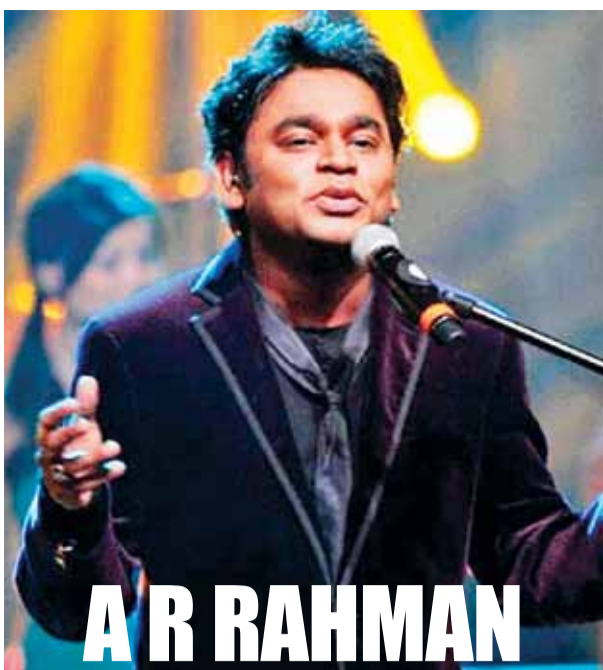
Including Johnson, four of the five previous Conservative prime ministers have been publicly challenged over their position as party leader, going back to Edward Heath in 1974. And Iain Duncan Smith lost a no-confidence vote as leader of the opposition in 2003.

Their example tells us that winning the vote may not prove

to be enough to secure Johnson's position. May survived a vote of no confidence in January 2019, and both Thatcher and Major faced leadership challenges (although under different rules and after significantly longer in office than either Johnson or May). Remarkably, all three won their respective ballots but both Thatcher and May resigned shortly afterwards and Major went on to lose the 1997 general election by a landslide.

Johnson's team will hope to use a victory to draw a line under partygate and other scandals but this may be difficult to achieve in a party that is publicly as divided as the Conservatives currently are.

Any victory will inevitably be compared to May's in December 2018. May won her vote by 200 votes (63%) to 117. In order to reach the equivalent level of support, Johnson would have needed to get the support of at least 236 of his fellow Tory MPs. He failed in this.



A R RAHMAN named ambassador of Indo-UK culture platform

Music great A R Rahman has been named the ambassador of British Council's 'India-UK Together Season of Culture', which aims to boost collaboration among emerging artists.

The 'Season of Culture' that marks the 75th anniversary of India's independence was officially launched on Tuesday here by Britain's Deputy High Commissioner to India Jan Thomson and Director (India) of British Council Barbara Wickham.

Rahman said as an artist, it is a pleasure to be part of an innovative cultural programme which supports creative excellence and artistic appreciation; and brings diverse audiences together.

«Today, creative expression and exchange can nurture young talent and create a global stage for fair and equitable access to arts,» he added.

Wickham said Rahman has been a significant adviser to the 'Season of Culture' and

his work and professional journey truly embody what the 'Season of Culture' stands for - working together, and artistic output that captures the imagination of the world.

Over 1,400 artistes will showcase their collaborations to millions of audiences across India, Britain, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, through a wide array of arts such as theatre, dance, visual arts, literature, music, architecture, design, fashion, tech-art, and new media art.

The 'Season of Culture' aims to build on the British Council's work in India and strengthen India-UK collaboration in the areas of arts, English and education.

Wickham said people in both the countries will have the chance to experience innovative and exciting creative work from some of the most promising UK and Indian artists pushing the envelope of creativity and the infusion of creative tech.



Aamir to attend the sports event on 12th June in Panchkula

KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh

Aamir Khan, who is also popularly known as one of the biggest Sports aficionados is all set to leave for Panchkula, Haryana to attend Khelo India Youth Games 2022 on the 12th, Sunday. Aamir will be present there as a celebrity guest and will be seen addressing the young athlete talent across schools and colleges of India. Aamir's presence will boost enthusiasm and help

in recognition of the talent present there. This is the first time Aamir Khan is going back to Haryana after Dangal.

This is not the first time that Aamir Khan has shown enthusiasm for grass root sports. From wrestling, and table tennis to cricket, the star is often seen indulging in different types of sports. Aamir, who is an avid viewer and a supporter of sports is also the unofficial brand ambassador of the grass root sports.

POTPOURRI

Jitendra Kumar-starrer sports comedy 'JAADUGAR' to premiere on Netflix in July



Sports dramedy film "Jaadugar", featuring actors Jitendra Kumar, Arushi Sharma and Jaaved Jaaferi, will premiere on Netflix on July 15.

Set in a football-loving town, "Jaadugar" is a story of a small-time magician, Meenu, with no athletic skill who must prove his worth in a prestigious inter-colony football tournament, in order to marry the love of his life.

The film is produced by Posham Pa Pictures and directed by Sameer Saxena, known for his work on popular series like "Yeh Meri Family", "Permanent Roommates" and "TVF Tripling". Saxena said the team's attempt is to present a fresh take on sports and romance.

"With magic as another key element in the film, we have tried to tell a story that's high on entertainment and caters to an extremely wide audience. With Netflix as our partner, we hope that the love with which we have made the film translates on screens across the globe," the director said in a statement.

Amit Golani and Saurabh Khanna of Posham Pa Pictures billed the film as a "light hearted tale" set in a small town.

Shabana Azmi wraps shoot of Abhishek Bachchan-led 'GHOOMER'



Veteran actor Shabana Azmi on Wednesday said she has completed the shoot of her upcoming movie "Ghoomer", starring Abhishek Bachchan.

Directed and produced by R Balki, the film is inspired by the achievement of Karoly Takacs, a Hungarian right hand shooter who won two Olympic Gold medals with his left hand after his right hand was seriously injured.

Balki, known for movies such as Cheeni Kum, Ki and Ka and Pad Man, also serves as the writer for the upcoming feature with writers Rahul Sengupta and Rishi Virman.

In an Instagram post, Azmi shared the update from the sets. She also revealed megastar Amitabh Bachchan has a guest appearance in "Ghoomer", with whom she will shoot a few scenes. "It's a wrap on Ghoomer except for a days shoot with Amitabh Bachchan in a guest appearance. R Balki, Saiyami Kher, Abhishek Bachchan, Angad Bedi maza aaya (had lot of fun) it all went by so quickly," the 71-year-old actor wrote.

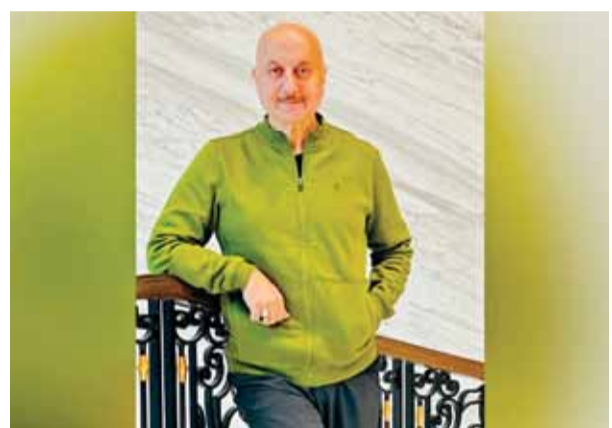
Anupam Kher announces 525th project, asks fans to suggest title

Veteran actor Anupam Kher on Sunday said he has started working on his 525th project, which he described as "a beautiful story of a common man".

The 67-year-old actor, who started his career with the 1984 movie "Saaransh", said the team has yet to finalise the name of the upcoming project and asked his fans to select one of the following options for the title - "The Last Signature", "Sarthak", "Nirnay", and "Dastakhat".

"Today I start the landmark 525th project of my career. A beautiful story of a common man. We are yet to decide the title of the film.

"Our producer, director and



I have different titles. So we thought the best way to finalise is to ask you all. Please help us!

On another note, I have a come a long way. Thanks to your love, appreciation and blessings! Jai

Netflix sets premiere date for 'She' season 2

The second season of the Imtiaz Ali-created crime drama "She" will start streaming from June 17, Netflix announced Wednesday.

The series follows Bhumi, played by Aaditi Pohankar, a timid Mumbai constable who realises the potential of her dormant sexuality when she goes undercover to expose a drug ring.

Netflix India shared the release date of the new chapter on its official Twitter page.

Netflix sets premiere date for 'She' season 2

"PSA: Mark your calendars! #SHE is back in 9 days! Catch S2 of #SHE on 17th June, only on Netflix," the tweet read.

Directed by Arif Ali and A v i n a s h Das, the first season of the series premiered on the streamer in March 2020. It also starred Vijay Varma, Kishore Kumar G, and Vishwas Kini.

The upcoming season is directed by Arif Ali and backed by Window Seat Films, Viacom18 Studios and Tipping Point.

Netflix sets premiere date for 'She' season 2

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Amit Golani and Saurabh Khanna of Posham Pa Pictures billed the film as a "light hearted tale" set in a small town.

Mithali Raj retires from international cricket

Mithali Raj, one of the greatest female cricketers to have played the game, on Wednesday announced retirement from all forms of international cricket after a two-decade long illustrious career.

Mithali ended her glorious career with a record 7805 runs in 232 ODIs. She also represented India in 12 Tests and 89 T20 Internationals.

The 39-year-old had already retired from the T20 format and her decision to stop playing all formats was expected after India's ODI World Cup campaign ended in March.

"I set out as a little girl on the

Madappa finishes tied 6th at USD 2 million International Series in England

Viraj Madappa continued his rich vein of form with a tied sixth finish at the USD 2million International Series England.

The Indian youngster, who has one win on the Asian Tour, had for a good part of the week contended for the title, before a triple bogey on third day pushed him and he carded an even par 71 on Sunday.

His rounds of 68-70-70-71 saw him at 5-under for the week as Zimbabwean Scott Vincent won a title for the second week in a row.

A week after winning the Gate Way to the Open Mizuno Open in Japan to secure a

Rohit Shetty begins shoot for Khatron Ke Khiladi 12

Filmmaker Rohit Shetty on Monday said he has started filming for his popular reality show Khatron Ke Khiladi in Cape Town, South Africa.

The 12th season of the adventure and stunt-based reality show features celebrity contestants facing their worst fears to win the coveted title. Shetty, who returns as the host of Khatron Ke Khiladi for the eighth time, shared the update via a short clip he posted on Instagram. Time to go crazy, wild, raw and real once again! KHATRON KE KHILADI!! Shoot begins! #capetown #southafrica @colorstv, the 48-year-old director, known for blockbuster films like "Singham", "Simmba" and "Golmaal" series, wrote. The celebrities participating in the 12th season of Khatron Ke Khiladi are Rubina Dilaik, Pratik Sehajpal, Sriti Jha, Nishant Bhat, Faisal Sheikh, Shivangi Joshi, Jannat Zubair, Tushar Kalia, Mohit Malik, Erika Packard, Chetna Pande, Kanika Mann, Aneri Vajani, and Rajiv Adatia.

Madappa finishes tied 6th at USD 2 million International Series in England

place in the 150th Open, Vincent won the International Series after a battle with Travis Smyth (68), Sadom Kaewkanjana (69) and Justin Harding (69), who finished behind him in that order.

Last year's Asian Tour No. 1 Kim Jooyung (72) was fifth and Madappa alongside Si-hwan Kim (67) and Turk Petit (70) was tied sixth.

Madappa was the highest placed Indian while Gaganjeet Bhullar (72) was T-23 and SSP Chawrasia (70) was T-30th.

'Suvyan 2022' held: Final design collection of NIIFT textile design students showcased

The Northern India Institute of Fashion Technology (NIIFT), Mohali presented the 20th Edition of 'Suvyan' - a display exhibition to showcase the final design collection of the graduating students of Textile design department at Hotel Shivalik View, Chandigarh.

This year Suvyan showcased 58 collections by the gradu-



ating students of the textile design department. The collections included apparels, accessories and home furnishing products. All of the products have been designed, keeping in

mind the latest, trending and unique themes that the companies and market demand.

The Chief Guest Dilip Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Industries & Commerce, Punjab & Chairman, NIIFT praised the hard work and effort of the students. The guest of honour was Sibin C, IAS, Secretary Cum Director, Department of Industries & Commerce, Punjab and Director General, NIIFT.

Your belief, love helped make me who I am: Sanjay remembers Sunil Dutt on B'Day

Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt on Monday paid tribute to his father Sunil Dutt on his 93rd birth anniversary, crediting the veteran actor-politician for helping him become "who I am today".

The "K.G.F: Chapter 2" star shared stills from Rajkumar Hirani's "Munna Bhai MBBS", his last film with his father, and said the late actor will always be his hero.

"Your belief and love helped make me who I am today. You were, are and will always be my



hero. Happy birthday, Dad," Sanjay Dutt wrote on Twitter. Honoured with the Padma

stars of Hindi Cinema during 1950s and 1960s.

He acted in several films including the classic Mother India where he would meet his future wife, actor Nargis, which catapulted him to stardom. His other credits include Gumraah, Waqt, Humraaz, Khandaan, Milan, Reshma Aur Shera, Padosan. The cinema icon's daughter, Congress leader Priya Dutt, shared a black-and-white photograph of her father on Instagram to mark the occasion.



Sikh devotees pay respects on the occasion of the 38th Anniversary of Operation Blue Star at Akal Takhat Sahib of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden temple) in Amritsar on Monday. Operation Blue Star was carried out by the Indian Army in June 1984

A Pet Project Films production and Sunit Sinha directorial

The film 'Ranj', made under the banner of Pet Project Films, has been released today narrating the story of a boy who is driven to despair in a hostile megacity. The film is written and directed by Sunit Sinha who has also co-produced the film with Adesh Sidhu. The team of Ranj was present at the promotion of the film including Adesh Sidhu, Ekta Sodhi, Kriti V. Sharma, Kuljeet Singh, and its writer-producer-director Sunit Sinha.

The adept star cast of the film includes Adesh Sidhu (in the lead role), Ekta Sodhi, Kuljeet Singh in pivotal roles, and V. K. Sharma, Madhu Sagar, Kriti V. Sharma, Sukumar Tudu, Rakesh Singh, Nutan Surya, Raju Kumar, Ashok Tiwari and Rahul Nigam in supporting yet critical roles.

'Ranj' - named 'Slow Burn' in English reflects a mess of irritating thoughts and insecurities of a young guy, Amanpreet who feels alienated in an oppressive city, driven to the breaking point by its ruthlessly apathetic citizens, driving him to commit violence against himself and others.

After the release of the film, Sunit Sinha said, "The



story of this film is one of its kind which shows how a boy who leaves his village to go out in search of work but has to face many difficulties in his life, and learns the truth of life is revealed. We hope the audience will feel the depth of the struggles of Amanpreet."

The lead actor and producer, Adesh Sidhu said, "I am very happy with the release of the film. It is a big thing for me to portray the feelings of a young boy in a film. Their compulsions show how they are coping with the situation. We hope that the audience will like this different film."

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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