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CORPORATES & INDUSTRY 5

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REVIEW MEETING FOR ACTION AGAINST GANGSTERS, CRIMINALS, DRUG SMUGGLERS IN HARYANA



SHELL PLANS TO INSTALL OVER 10,000 CHARGING POINTS ACROSS INDIA BY 2030



SNEAK A PEEK WITH THE TRAILER OF THE THEATRICAL SMASH HIT 'SOHREYAN DA PIND AA GAYA'



Indian economy expected to grow by 7.5% this year: Modi



India takes over SCO rotating presidency

Uzbekistan on Friday handed over the rotating presidency of the eight-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to India in this historic city of Samarkand. Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev chaired the 22nd SCO summit in Samarkand which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "As a result #SCOSamarkand-Summit, India will host next SCO summit as a chairman of Organisation in 2023. We will do our best to assist India, our strategic partner, in the implementation of this responsible mission," Uzbek Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov tweeted.

Indian economy is expected to grow by 7.5 per cent this year and it will be the highest among the world's largest economies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Friday.

India is making progress to become a manufacturing hub while highlighting various aspects of the country's economy. "We are making progress on making India a manufacturing hub. India's young and talented workforce makes us naturally competitive," he said.

Indian diplomats upset with Punjab CM's false claim on BMW setting manufacturing plant in state

Diplomats in the External Affairs Ministry in India and the abroad are upset with the claims made by the Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann about setting up of a new manufacturing plant by leading auto giant BMW in the state which was later refuted by the latter. According to a source with the Ministry, the diplomats see it as a question of credibility and said that such tall claims should be avoided as it hurts the credibility of the country and the government too. The source said that it has left the diplomats embarrassed. During Mann's visit to Germany, the Indian diplomats had arranged a meeting. However, after that he announced that BMW had decided to set up a new manufacturing plant in his state.

"The efforts of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to rope in major investments from Germany bore fruit on Tuesday as leading auto giant BMW agreed to set up its auto part manufacturing unit in the state," said a statement from government. However, releasing an official statement, the BMW Group denied such plan on Wednesday. "The BMW Group is firmly committed to its Indian operations with its manufacturing plant in Chennai, a parts warehouse in Pune, a training centre in Gurgaon-NCR and a well-developed dealer network across major metropolises of the country. BMW Group India has no plans for setting up additional manufacturing operations in Punjab," the statement added.

Sukhbir Badal appears before SIT in police firing case second time



CHANDIGARH: Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) President Sukhbir Badal on Wednesday appeared before the Special Investigation Team (SIT), the second time this month, here in the 2015 Kotkapura police firing on a crowd protesting the alleged desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib. At that time he was the Deputy Chief Minister in the SAD-BJP coalition government and was holding the home portfolio. Earlier, the SIT summoned Sukhbir Badal on September 6 and questioned him for over three hours in the Behbal Kalan firing case, both Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan cases were interlinked and occurred after the sacrifice of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Punjab Government declares War against stubble burning

Punjab Government has declared a War on stubble burning to save water, soil and environment from pollution. Punjab Agriculture Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal today held a meeting with district Agriculture officers to discuss a blueprint to control stubble burning and implementation at the district level.

Punjab Agriculture Minister said that to control stubble burning is a major challenge for the state due to which this issue of pollution caused by stubble burning is being highlighted at National and International level which gives a bad name to Punjab. "To put an end to the practice of stubble burning and paddy straw management the Punjab government in the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has decided to take various concrete steps such as providing agriculture implements on subsidy to farmers, running awareness campaigns and some new scientific methods such as decomposer spray are being adopted to stop stubble burning practice in the state.

Punjab Governor meets representatives of the border villages

They should especially be extra vigilant of the air dropping of contraband via drones from across the Zero Line. Governor suggested forming Citizens Defense Committees in the border villages like the initiative taken up in district Gurdaspur. He said that with the vigilance of the Defense Committees, anti-social and anti-national elements can be identified and apprehended. He said that he would suggest the state government to form citizen security committees in the six districts of the border region to assist in village security and to work on social issues in their respective areas. Expressing concern over illegal mining in the border areas, Purohit said that illegal mining in border areas is a threat to the security of the country. He instructed the officials to keep a hawk's eye over illegal mining near the border and opined that along with other charges, a case of treason should be registered against those guilty of mining in the areas that jeopardize National Security.

Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal gave a call to all the officers and employees to work practically at ground zero instead of just doing paperwork. Agriculture Minister today directed the senior officers not to give leave to any officer or employee of the agriculture department till November 7.

Former Punjab CM Amarinder Singh to join BJP on September 19



Former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Friday criticised Union FM Nirmala Sitharaman over her statement on the 1991 economic reforms. Chidambaram tweeted, "The FM is reported to have said that the 1991 reforms were 'half-baked', Thank God, Dr Manmohan Singh did not serve over-cooked and unpalatable food like Demonetisation, multiple-rates GST and savage taxes on petrol & diesel. We thank the FM for revealing that she took bakery and cooking courses in University," he added.

According to reports in a section of the media, the Finance Minister during a book release function said that the 1991 reforms were half-baked.

Former Punjab Chief minister and Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) chief Amarinder Singh will join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on September 19. PLC spokesperson Pritpal Singh Baliawal said that Singh will also announce the merger of his party with the BJP the same day.

He said that a few former MLAs will also join the BJP along with Singh on September 19. Speculations of Amarinder Singh joining the BJP had grown stronger after he met Union Home Minister Amit Shah on September 12.

"Had a very productive meeting with Hon'ble Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Discussed various issues pertaining to national security, the rising cases of narco-terrorism in Punjab and the future roadmap for the overall holistic development of Punjab," Singh had tweeted after meeting Shah.

Singh had floated his own party after quitting the Congress last year citing humiliation by the grand-old party.

The two-time chief minister of Punjab had fought the assembly elections in the state earlier this year in alliance with the BJP as well as Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

Haryana becoming a junction for supply of IED in the country

SATISH HANDA

With repeated incidents of recovery of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) in Haryana state in past few months including recent case a couple of days ago in which IED packet along with RDX was recovered on Jind Road near Kainchi Chowk at Kaithal when SHO Titram police station Ram Lal reached at the spot immediately along with police force and entire area around the spot was sealed and a case was registered under Explosive Substance Act. STI Ambala started investigation in the case. A bomb disposal squad arrived from Madhuban (Karnal) and diffused the bombs.

Surprisingly, in past few months IED has also been recovered at Ambala, Karnal and Kurukshetra districts which is a clear indication that Haryana becoming a junction for supply of explosive to other states in the country. Maqsood Ahmed SP Kaithal also arrived at the spot told media persons that in this case of blast of timer bomb it would have caused severe destruction in about 75 meters area due to explosion.

Seizure of 1050 gms of gold valued at Rs. 54.70 lakh at SGRDJ Int'l Airport, Amritsar

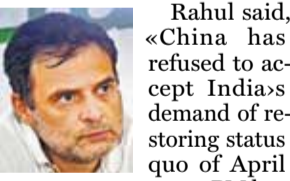
JAGMOHAN SINGH

Custom Department has seized Gold worth Rs. 54.70 lakhs at Shri Guru Ramdas ji International Airport. An official statement issued here today stated that an employee of Spicejet who came down from aerobridge stairs after entering Flight no. SG56 from Dubai to Amritsar on 15-16.09.2022 was intercepted by officers of Customs, SGRDJ Airport, Amritsar at 4:20AM. During checking, two packets wrapped in Black adhesive tape were found in his possession. Nine Gold Biscuits weighing 1050 grams valuing Rs. 54,70,500/- were found concealed in those packets. On further interrogation, he admitted that the gold was collected from under a seat which was left there by an international passenger, said the official.

The said employee disclosed that he was smuggling gold by the same modus operandi for the last 3 months. The said employee has been arrested by the Customs Officers. The Customs department is carrying out searches in the case. Further investigation is underway to nab other persons involved in this ring, said official.

PM has given 1,000 sq kms of territory to China without fight: Rahul

NEW DELHI: After reports of disengagement with China at Ladakh, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday attacked the government for not restoring the status quo of April 2020 at Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.



Rahul said, "China has refused to accept India's demand of restoring status quo of April 2020. PM has given 1000 Sq Kms of territory to China without a fight. Can GOI explain how this territory will be retrieved?" he said.

World Ozone Day: Single use plastics will be strictly prohibited says Meet Hayer



"If nature has made anyone the most powerful of all the creatures on earth, it is human being, but it is unfortunate that human beings have done the most damage to nature." It was stated by Environment, Science and Technology Minister Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer while speaking on the occasion of the state level function organized by Punjab Pollution Control Board at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar on the occasion of World Ozone Day.

SGPC delegation holds meeting with Pak High Commission at Delhi

JAGMOHAN SINGH

Under its process for organising religious congregations at Pakistan, dedicated to 100 year centenary of Saka (massacre) Sri Panja Sahib, a special delegation of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) today met Pakistan's High Commissioner at Delhi and demanded to issue maximum number of visas to Sikh pilgrims to attend different centenary congregations on this occasion.

This delegation met Pakistan's High Commissioner Mr. Aftab Hasan Khan and handed over a letter written by SGPC President. The SGPC delegation included General Secretary Jatendar Karnail Singh Panjoli, members Rajinder Singh Mehta, Surjit Singh Bhittewal, Ajaib Singh Abhyasi, Gurmeet Singh Booh, Shiromani Akali Dal Delhi leader Harvinder Singh Sharma, Prabhjit Singh, SGPC additional secretary Paramjit Singh Saroa and in-charge Rajinder Singh Ruby.

Giving information about the historical significance of Saka Sri Panja Sahib, the SGPC delegation told High Commission that the 100 year centenary of this Saka is being marked by SGPC at a large scale on October 30, 2022. It was told that as per the sentiments of the Sangat (community), the SGPC wants to organise large congregation at the place where this massacre took place in 1922, to offer tributes to the martyrs.

The sentiment of Sangat was apprised to the High Commission that the community largely wants to participate in these congregations dedicated to historical day, therefore, visas should be granted to Sikh pilgrims with open heart.

The delegation also sought early permission for an advance delegation of SGPC to visit Pakistan, so that preparations and complete arrangements of centenary congregations could be made in time in coordination with Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

The delegation leader Jatendar Karnail Singh Panjoli and Rajinder Singh Mehta said that the High Commission of Pakistan has also been asked to grant maximum visas to Sikh pilgrims even during routine times as well. They said that although special jathas (groups) of pilgrims visit Sikh shrines located in Pakistan every year on four different occasions including Gurburp of Guru Nanak Dev, but the Sangat wishes to visit shrines even on other days. The Sangat wishes that they should not face any inconvenience in getting visas for visiting Gurdwara Sahibs and can visit Sikh shrines whenever they want by getting visas.

Ghulam Nabi Azad receives militant threat

FW DESK

Former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad has received a threat from the militant outfit The Resistance Front (TRF) claiming that the recent entry of Azad in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir following his exit from the Congress is part of a well-thought-out strategy by the BJP-run central government. "Before leaving the party, Azad had a closed-door meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval," an online poster said. The poster also claimed that the BJP is using displaced Kashmiri Pandits for its political agenda and Ghulam Nabi "is part of the plan B of the Centre."

100 YEARS OF SAKA SRI PANJA SAHIB

Quality Hammer to hit corrupt employees in Haryana: Khatter

SATISH HANDA

Past few years scenario in Haryana reveals that few government employees including officers feel accepting bribe is a part of their duty as such large number of scams of value worth crores of rupees in important developmental projects in the state were exposed attracting headlines in newspapers in past couple of years especially at Ambala, Faridabad, Gurugram, Karnal, Jind and Panchkula at the time when state government was facing spread of epidemic outbreak in the state and was busy in saving the lives of victims suffering from disease, whereas, on the other hand few corrupt government employees were busy in collecting bribe. There is a long list of such developmental projects in which corrupt



government employees released payments to contractors and suppliers on the basis of fake bills without work done or receipt of material. According to information, several such developmental projects are yet incomplete due to shortage of funds allocated for these projects still hanging on fire as a result of handful of corrupt government employees.

Information reveals, large number of officers as well as

staff involved in corrupt practices in past sometime are now on the radar of Quality Assurance Hammer introduced by ruling government in the state likely to recover bribe amount along with dividends from corrupt employees. Ruling government in the state presently focusing on this vital issue in which people in the state have been deprived of benefits and facilities due delayed projects as a result of a handful of corrupt employees in government offices. While talking to media persons Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khatter said that all such cases have been referred to Alok Mittal Chief CID Haryana and Shatrughit Kapoor Chief of State Vigilance Bureau to investigate frauds and push all those behind bars involved in corruption.

Khatter on receipt of large number of complaints has announced a Quality Assurance Committee at Gurugram to bring transparency in developmental engineering projects in different sectors including education, health, irrigation, PWD, construction of roads and transport announced in the state which will function under direct control of Haryana Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal to monitor entire functioning. He told that all government tenders as well as purchases will be made on line on a portal to bring transparency in procurements, avoid corruption as well as supply of sub-standard material. Khatter said, 174 developmental projects of value worth Rs 2000 crore have been announced recently in the state of September 4, 2022.

Review meeting for action against gangsters, criminals, drug smugglers in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

In view of increasing criminal activities in Haryana state in past sometime as regard arrest of gangsters, large number of drug smuggling cases and increased incidents of theft, snatchings, murders and crimes against women by anti-social elements in the state a review meeting presided by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khatter was held at police headquarters to review action against increasing crimes in Haryana state in which Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij, DGP P.K. Aggarwal and all senior police officers from all over the state were present. The aim for holding this meeting was to review measures to wipe out crimes in the state.

Chief Minister expressed deep concern over arrest of few gangsters in recent past some-



time, fast siring cases of drug smuggling, fast increasing drug addiction among youths, increased cases of murder, theft, kidnapping and rape causing fear among residents in the states and it is duty of police to adopt strict measures against anti-social elements grooming in the state and provide relief to the people. Chief Minister while addressing police officers said that police officers in the state should perform their duty without any pressure to maintain law and order in

the state and should take strict action against criminals since its government duty to provide safe and secure environments to people in the state having faith in police department. Khatter said, police in the state have taken stern action against criminals, gangsters and anti-social elements in past sometime and in case they continue similar action against anti-social elements people in the state will get relief and Haryana may become a crime-free state.

Vigilance Bureau arrests two Punjab Roadways inspectors absconding in corruption case



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Punjab Vigilance Bureau during its ongoing campaign against corruption on Saturday has arrested two retired inspectors of Punjab Roadways who had been indulging in changing the departure timing of government buses to private buses in lieu of bribes. Both the accused were on the run in a case registered against them on charges of bribery.

In an official statement issued here today, a spokesperson of Punjab Vigilance Bureau (VB) said some employees of Punjab Roadways were accused of collecting daily/monthly bribes by changing the running timings of state passenger buses from the bus stand to favour the private buses. In this regard the VB had registered a case FIR No 5 dated 30-04-2021, under section 7, 7-A of Prevention of Corruption Act and section 120-B of IPC at Vigilance Bureau Police Station, Amritsar.

VB arrests Punjab Roadways Supervisor absconding in corruption case

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Punjab Vigilance Bureau on Monday has arrested one more official of the Punjab Roadways who had been indulged in changing the departure timing of government buses to private buses in lieu of bribes in connivance with other employees. The arrested accused Satnam Singh, station supervisor, Punjab Roadways, depot-1, Jalandhar was on the run in a case registered against him on charges of bribery. In an official statement issued here today, a spokesperson of Punjab Vigilance Bureau (VB) said some employees of Punjab Roadways were accused of collecting daily/monthly bribes by changing the running timings of state passenger buses from the bus stand to favour the private buses.

Court sentences man to 12 yrs in prison for sexually assaulting woman

AMBALA: A man has been sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment by a court here for sexually assaulting a woman and instigating her to attempt suicide. Additional Sessions Judge, Fast track court, Ambala, Aarti Singh on Wednesday awarded the jail term to Vijay Kumar, a resident of the city. According to the prosecution, the woman, who was then 18 years old, had jumped before a train at Ambala Cantt railway station in 2017 which left both her legs crushed. On the basis of her statement, the Government Railway Police, Ambala Cantt had registered a case against Kumar. In her complaint, the woman said Kumar had assured to marry her while concealing the fact that he was already married. He took her to various hotels where he sexually assaulted her. When she insisted on marriage he refused and threatened her with dire consequences.

Four arrested in case of Crypto fraud worth crores of rupees



SATISH HANDA Ambala

The Haryana Police have arrested four persons allegedly cheated large number of people amount worth crores of rupees by luring them with an offer of high returns through a fake company Crypto World Trading Company having office in Sector 8 Ambala City with a wide network of agents mainly in adjoining districts Karnala, Kurukshetra, Yamunanagar and many other districts in the state. Addressing a press conference SP Ambala Jashandeep Singh Randhawa said that CIA staff Ambala police led by Inspector Harjinder Singh arrested four accused identified as Kapil Jaiswal a resident of Ekta Vihar Ambala Cantt, Vikas Kalra a resident of Ambala City, Tarun Taneja, and Ramesh Kumar both residents of Kurukshetra.

Randhawa told that a case was registered at Sadar police station Ambala City on the complaint of Mandeep Singh a resident of village Bhanokheri near Ambala City on 24th August 2022 when Kapil Jaiswal was arrested on 6th September, Vikas was arrested from Amritsar (Punjab) on 8th Sep-

tember, Tarun was nabbed from Pilani (Rajasthan) on 10th September and Ramesh was arrested from Ambala on 12th September. Ambala Sadar police station had received several complaints against the firm after complaint lodged by Mandeep resident of village Bhanokheri duped by them as well as several others amount worth lakhs of rupees investing with Crypto World Trading Company.

Randhawa said, during investigation, properties worth about Rs 60 lakh have been seized from the accused including the seizure of 13 bank accounts and the recovery of four luxury vehicles, cash, and gold. He said investigation is going on by a team of SIT led by DSP and action will be taken against whoever is found to be involved during the course of the investigation and detail of all agents associated with this cheat company are being procured for further action. Information reveals, company owners as well as its agents were assuring investors claiming that their company was working on the investment software designed by google duly approved by the government.

378 lost children & 482 adults rescued in 8 months in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

Anti-human Trafficking Teams in Haryana police played a important role to rescue 378 lost children and 482 lost adults in Haryana state in past eight months with effect from January 1 till August 31 this year. Information reveals large numbers of children as well as old-age persons seen begging at the bus stands, railway stations, outside religious temples and other public places or involved in child labor rescued by the police and assisted to re-join their family. In few cases where lost children are found handicapped, deaf and dumb unable to hear or speak



and found at the mercy of others, in such cases members of Anti-human Trafficking units have to face lot of inconvenience while joining these rescued children with their families. There are few rescued children from other states unable to understand language and during counseling of such children Anti-human Trafficking staff members have to face lot of inconvenience.

Sukhpreet Kaur wife of Sarbjit Singh who died Pak jail killed in fatal road accident

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Sukhpreet Kaur wife of Sarbjit Singh killed in a fatal road accident here today at Village Fatehpur in the Amritsar district.

However Sukhpreet Kaur's husband Sarbjit Singh died in Pakistan's jail in 2013.

Police said that Sukhpreet Kaur was a pillion rider on a two-wheeler when she 'accidentally' fell from it. She was immediately shifted to hospital where she breathed her last. Her last rites will be performed on Tuesday at her native village Bhiakhind falling in the Tarn Taran district nearly 45 kilometers from the city of Amritsar.

She was survived by two daughters Poonam and Swandeeep Kaur.

However, Dalbir Kaur, the



sister of Sarbjit Singh died on June 26, 2022. She was 67.

Dalbir Kaur had hit the headlines when she led a vociferous campaign for the release of her brother from the Pakistan jail, where he had been lodged since 1991 after being accused of being involved in a string of bomb blasts in that country's Punjab province.

Sarbjit Singh, 49, had died six days after an attack on him in Lahore prison by the inmates in April 2013. He was attacked by bricks and other sharp objects and had suffered injuries in his back and head and had gone into coma.

Punjab will lead the country in shooting, Anjum Moudgil's World No 1 ranking, a matter of pride :Sports Minister

KULBIR SINGH KALSI

The performance of Indian shooters in international tournaments has drawn the attention of the world towards the excellent talent that India possesses in the shooting arena. During the last 18-20 years, India has won many medals in Olympic Games, World Championships, and Asian and Commonwealth Games shooting. Punjab will lead the country in this sport which is progressing rapidly. India will show better performance in Paris Olympic Games in 2024.

This was stated by Sports Minister Gurmeet Singh Meets Hayer

while addressing the felicitation ceremony of the shooters here late last evening. The occasion was the celebration of the World's No. 1 ranking shooter Anjum Moudgil, organized by Ankush Bharadwaj



Sports Foundation in collaboration with Ambika Group. The Sports Minister honoured Anjum Moudgil, Gauri, Ajitesh Kaushal, Vijayveer Sidhu, Udevir Sidhu, Vishwajit Singh, Sifat Kaur, Unish, Shikha Chaudhary, Naina Verma, Somil Chaudhary, Divesh Verma, Devansh and Manraj and coach Deepali Deshpande along with Parveen Verma, Sumeet Soni, Amit Sood, Sajjan Sharma, Ashwani Sharma.



Municipal Corporation Chandigarh launched an Air balloon carrying the Swachh Amrit Mahotsav and Swachhata League Logos at Rose Garden.

4 Ambala Central Jail prisoners threatened Dy Jail Supdt to kill him, his family by Lawrence gang

SATISH HANDA

Baldev Nagar police station Ambala City registered a case against four prisoners lodged in Ambala central jail under various sections of IPC allegedly threatened to kill Dr. Rajiv Kumar Deputy Superintendent along arrived with Neelum and other security men on the information that prisoners are carrying a mobile phone in the jail for search operation of mobile phone illegally carried by them. When Dr. Rajiv Kumar started search for the mobile phone in the barrack in which they were lodged they started misbehaving and abused him threatening to kill him as well as his family by Lawrence gang members claiming themselves members of the same group.

Dr Rajiv Kumar along with security staff traced the mobile from a prisoner during search but they refused to hand over the same and started throwing mobile phone from one prisoner to another and finally thrown the same on the floor damaged and broken into pieces. The four prisoners were identified as Surya Pratap Singh a brother of gangster Kala Rana, Ankur Singh, Yog Raj alias Pinka Gujjar and Jitender Singh all involved in large number of criminal activities. Dr. Rajiv called another jail security staff which arrived immediately and overpowered all four prisoner, later shifted them in separate cells. Information reveals, Dr Rajiv Kumar earlier received threatening calls from prisoner Surya Pratap Singh also

Gang of 3 including 2 women in sale-purchase of new born children busted by CM Flying Squad

SATISH HANDA

CM Flying Squad Haryana on an information recently busted a gang of three including two women at Faridabad running a network of agents in Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and other neighboring states for purchase of new born children delivered by pregnant women from extremely poor families and selling them earning handsome profit in deals. Among those arrested by CM Flying Squad team during raid at a hotel in Badarpur were identified a male Deepak a resident of Mahindra Park Delhi, his two female companions Meenu a resident of Uttam Nagar Delhi and Anita resident of Sultanpuri Delhi both also involved in carrying passengers on E-Riksha. All three members of the gang as well as their agents usually used to visit government hospitals in search of pregnant women from financially weaker families likely to have delivery in a hope to have a deal for the new arrival.

CM Flying Squad led by Rajesh Chechi DSP succeeded in preparing a fake couple willing to purchase a newly born child through racket of three. The fake couple comprising of Satbir a police sub inspector and Rajesh Kumari ASI contacted three expressing desire to own a newly born child and were



offered a nine days old child when they gathered in a hotel at Badarpur to finalized deal when three demanded Rs 6 lakh and the deal was finalized at Rs 4 lakh after negotiations. At the time of getting advance payments against deal CM Flying Squad team prepared a video as well as recorded entire deal and on a signal conducted raid and arrested three in a case under human trafficking act.

Ramesh Chechi DSP told media persons that CM Flying Squad on a clue had arrested organizer of a NGO last month allegedly finalized a deal for the sale of 15 days old child at Ballabgarh at Rs 1.5 lakh and another deal was finalized by them in sale of a nine days old baby born in a hospital at Delhi sold to a couple in Punjab few months ago and the three earned handsome amount in this deal. Chechi told that during preliminary investigation the three arrested accuse admitted having a chain of agents in different places usually in touch with pregnant women belonging to financially weaker fami-

lies usually visiting government as well as charitable hospitals and convince them to sell their expected child. They told that their agents also visit private hospitals to remain in search of female clients usually fail to conceive and willing to own a newly born child and do not hesitate to spend any amount.

According to Alok Kumar Mittal CID Chief in Haryana state while talking to media persons at Chandigarh told that CM Flying Squad in the state during 344 raids in past three months has registered 265 cases and arrested 126 persons. Among few important cases exposed in Haryana state by the Flying Squad included several manufacturing units functioning in the state illegally. CM Flying Squad also busted a racket at Gurugram preparing fake Aadhar Cards. The team detected few call centers allegedly cheating people on line. The team in a complaint also raided Municipal Corporation office at Panipat a couple of months ago and found large number of public cases lying pending in the office since a long time without action which included 727 cases related to property ID and 62 cases related to birth and death certificates lying pending since a long time without reason.

MCC signs LoI with NEERI, Nagpur to work together towards environmental protection



KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh

Municipal Corporation Chandigarh signed an Letter of Intent with National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) to work together towards environmental protection, pollution prevention and control through need based research, knowledge dissemination, training and

capacity building in areas like Water & Waste Water treatment, Sewage, Solid Waste Management, Air pollution control etc.

Joint Commissioner Gurinder Sodhi signed the LoI with Director NEERI, Dr Vaidya, in the presence of Sarbjit Kaur Mayor, Chandigarh at Nagpur today. The Mayor and the 21 councillors were on Study tour to Nagpur and visited NEERI.



Blistering will not stop us, we will unite India, says Rahul Gandhi

Amid intermittent rains and swelling public turnout, Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra entered the third day in Kerala on Tuesday, with the Congress leader and scores of supporters marching along the streets without umbrella when it rained.

Gandhi, who has embarked on the 3,500 km Kanyakumari-Kashmir footmarch, said though the participants suffered from blisters on their feet, the campaign would go on.

Scores of people lined up on the roadsides despite rains in the city, to greet Gandhi and the other padayatri. The Congress leaders, including Gandhi, walked along the streets without umbrella when it was raining. In a Facebook post, Gandhi said, "even though the feet have blisters, we are out to unite the country. We are not going to stop. #BharatJodoYatra," and uploaded a related video clip.

The third day of the yatra,



which commenced around 7.15 am from Kaniyapuram near Kazhakoottam, saw an encouraging turnout of people like the previous two days of the Kerala leg of the foot march, which is set to cover 3,570 kilometres from Kanyakumari to Kashmir over a 150-day period.

When the yatra reached its first halt point of the day at Attingal here, AICC general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh tweeted, "The

padayatra has just reached the morning break point at Mamom near Attingal, where there will be a number of interactions with different groups." The yatra is scheduled to resume at 5 pm and end for the day at Kallambalam junction here.

On Monday evening, the yatra had covered 100 kilometres when it reached Kazhakoottam. Addressing a large crowd there, Gandhi had said elections can be won with hatred, violence

and anger, but it cannot solve the socio-economic problems facing the country. "India's dream is broken, not scattered. To realise that dream, we are bringing India together. 100 km done. And, we have just begun," Gandhi tweeted at the end of the day's yatra.

Ramesh had tweeted that the Bharat Jodo Yatra has completed exactly 100 km and that it has "rattled, unnerved and disturbed the BJP, whereas the Congress party has already been refreshed 100-fold. Every step we walk renews our resolve!" The 150-day foot march was launched from Kanyakumari in neighbouring Tamil Nadu on September 7 and will cover 12 states and two Union territories. The Bharat Jodo Yatra, which entered Kerala on September 10 evening, will traverse through the state covering 450 kilometres, touching seven districts over a period of 19 days before entering Karnataka on October 1.

Bharat Jodo Yatra, a new freedom movement: Economist H M Desarda



The Congress party's Bharat Jodo Yatra is a "new freedom movement or a second freedom struggle" to unite the people against the BJP's alleged "polarising strategy", a noted economist and former member of Maharashtra State Planning Board professor H M Desarda, said here on Tuesday.

The professor, who has joined the yatra from Kanyakumari to support it on behalf of the civil society, said political parties and mass movements opposed to

BJP's alleged "polarising strategy" should unite.

Speaking at a press conference here, he claimed that the yatra has been jointly organised by the Congress and civil society organisations to oppose the allegedly bankrupt policies of the Central government.

"The yatra should unite the common people to counter the forces of fascism and the status quo. The need of the hour is to unite 90 per cent of the people who are unorganised farm-

ers, self-employed daily wage earners and construction and domestic workers.

"... It is a new freedom movement, a second freedom struggle," he added.

Highlighting the problems he has seen in the country, the professor claimed that the growth and governance model in the country and many States was still "feudal, colonial, pseudo-socialist and parasitic".

He further contended that even after 75 years of independence, though the colonial rulers have left, "their bankrupt policies are still being perpetrated" and as a result, more than a billion people in the country are in deep distress which has allegedly worsened during the Narendra Modi government's rule.

Therefore, the character of the Congress party has to undergo a radical change, it should become the Nationalist Movement that it was during Mahatma Gandhi's time, he said.

Hyderpora encounter: SC dismisses man's plea for exhuming son's body



FW DESK

The Supreme Court on Monday denied a petition of a man Mohammad Latif Magrey, who was killed in Hyderpora, in Srinagar last November. A bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and JB Pardiwalla said once buried, the body should not be disturbed. The bench said that the Jammu and Kashmir administration has submitted that the deceased was buried with all honour. While the court said it respected the sentiments of the father, the bench made it clear that it cannot decide matters on sentiments and the relief granted by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court was just and equitable.

Hindi Diwas: Hindi's simplicity, sensitivity always attract people says PM Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday that Hindi has brought India special honour globally and

that its simplicity and sensitivity always attract people. In his tweet on Hindi Diwas, Modi expressed heartfelt thanks to all who have made tireless efforts to enrich and strengthen the country's largest spoken language. Hindi Diwas is observed every year on September 14.

BJP releases another sting video on Excise Policy, alleges 'money used in Punjab & Goa elections'



Bhartiya Janata Party on Thursday released another video of sting operation on alleged Delhi liquor scam. Releasing the video of this sting at the BJP headquarters, BJP's national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said that the CBI's accused number 9 Amit Arora in the liquor scam has exposed the Aam Aadmi Party and its policy in the new video. BJP spokesperson said that in this video, accused number 9 has revealed how much money was taken from whom under the liquor policy and how the scam was planned. The BJP spokesperson alleged that the whole policy was formulated to carry out the scam. "Amit Arora is telling that the commission was fixed by the government and the liquor scam money was used to contest elections in Goa and Punjab", he said. In the sting video, Amit Arora can be seen saying that the AAP government gave the business of around ten thousand crores to only two players.

Fuel prices regulated by election dates, not by global rates: Congress

NEW DELHI: Congress alleged that petrol and diesel prices were regulated by the election dates and not due to the global rates.

Addressing a press conference, party spokesperson Gaurav Vallabh alleged that retail inflation, GDP growth, and a depreciating rupee are some of the examples that paint a concerning picture of how the economy was being managed. He alleged that the BJP government was creating new lows with more data points released by its own government. The middle and lower-income groups suffer the most due to the callousness and incompetence of the government.

«Retail inflation has been above RBI's upper band of



6 per cent for the last seven months. Commodities such as food, vegetables, and fuel hurt the middle and lower-income groups most. The government has been primarily the most inconsiderate towards the fuel prices. Since they have a cascading effect across all economic activities, the government's inactions speak of its cluelessness and misguided focus, « he said. The party leader said the

prices of crude oil have been consistently on a downward spiral for the last few months and are at a seven-month low.

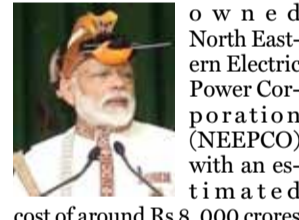
«But the prices of petrol and diesel in our country don't seem to reflect this trend, even after deregulation, which means that the prices of petrol and diesel should change as per the global prices.» As per the Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell (PPAC, Government of India), Crude Oil Indian Basket as on September 8 was USD 88.00 per bbl.

On May 21, the government announced a cut in excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 8 and Rs 6 a litre, respectively, leading to a reduction of petrol rates by Rs 9.5 per litre and diesel by Rs 7 per litre

PM to inaugurate NE's biggest power plant and only greenfield airport in Arunachal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, responding to Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu's request, has agreed to inaugurate 600 MW Kameng Hydro Electric Project which will be northeast India's largest power plant. He will also inaugurate the region's first greenfield airport at Itanagar, officials said on Friday.

An official of Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that Khandu apprised Modi about the Kameng Hydro Electric Project, executed by the state-



owned North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) with an estimated

cost of around Rs 8,000 crores and about the greenfield airport, commissioned by the Airport Authority of India at a cost of Rs 650 crore.

The Chief Minister told the Prime Minister that the 600 MW Kameng Hydro Elec-

tric Project is the largest in the northeastern region and it would be a boon for the power sector in the country, especially the northeastern states and provide power for grid stability.

The Chief Minister said that the Director General of Civil Aviation has issued the necessary licence on September 7 to operationalise the greenfield airport, which was recently renamed by the state government as "Donyi Polo Airport".

EC declares 253 registered unrecognised political parties as 'inactive'

NEW DELHI: As part of its action for ensuring due compliance by Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs), the Election Commission of India (ECI) led by Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar, has delisted 86 non-existent RUPPs and declared another 253 as 'inactive RUPPs'.

The action against 339 non-compliant RUPPs takes the tally to 537 defaulting RUPPs since May 25, 2022.

The ECI said that as per statutory requirements under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, every political party has to communicate any change in its name, head office, office-bearers, address, PAN etc. to the Commis-

sion without delay. A total of 86 RUPPs have been found to be non-existent either after a physical verification carried out by the respective chief electoral officers of concerned states/UTs or based on report of undelivered letters/notices from the postal authority sent to the registered address of the concerned RUPP.

It may be recalled that the ECI had delisted 87 and 111 RUPPs through orders dated May 25 and June 20, respectively.

The latest decision against 253 non-compliant RUPPs has been taken based on reports received from chief electoral officers of seven states — Bihar, Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana



and Uttar Pradesh.

These 253 RUPPs have been declared inactive, as they have not responded to the letter/notice delivered to them and have not contested a single election, be it Assembly polls or Parliamentary elections of 2014 and 2019.

Centre trying to establish 'Agency Raj', deterring job creation: Mamata Banerjee

Two days after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seized Rs 17.32 crore in cash from the residence of a city-based businessman in connection with a mobile gaming app fraud case, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee echoed her Cabinet colleagues in slamming the recent central agency activities in the state.

"The Union government does not want more jobs to be created. An attempt is being made to establish an 'Agency Raj'. There is absolutely no development," the Chief Minister said at an event to hand over appointment letters to various beneficiaries under 'Utkarsh Bangla', a skill development scheme of the state government, at the Netaji Indoor Stadium here.

She also launched a scathing attack on the Centre over disinvestment of government stake in public sector entities.

"The Union government is selling Railways, SAIL and CIL. How will new jobs be created? In the midst of this Agency Raj, we are trying to develop industries and create jobs in the state. I am proud that after being trained here, the youth of West Bengal are getting job offers from outside. I request those who are going outside



to come back to the state as there will be enough jobs in West Bengal only," the Chief Minister said.

She also attacked the opposition parties in the state and the media for showing West Bengal in poor light. "They are always resorting to slander. Had they highlighted the positive works of the state government, both Bengal and its people would have benefited," Banerjee said.

Ever since the seizure of large amount of cash by the ED on Saturday, Trinamool Congress leaders have been slamming the recent central agency activities in the state.

When the counting of notes was on Saturday, state minister and Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim had said that the continuous raids and search operations by the central agencies were part of the Centre and BJP's ploy to show West Bengal in poor light.

On 125th anniversary of Battle of Saragarhi, march & congregation organised



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

A Saragarhi march and congregation was organised today by Saragarhi Foundation with the support of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), dedicated to the 125th anniversary of Battle of Saragarhi of 1897. Jatendar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, Giani Harpreet Singh especially participated in the Saragarhi march during its start, while prominent personalities were present in the congregation at Gurdwara Saragarhi Sahib.

Addressing the congregation on this occasion, SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dharami said that the Battle of Saragarhi is an outstanding allegory of bravery of Sikh soldiers, which has raised the image of Sikh Qaum (community) all over the world. He said that the minority Sikhs have always made great sacrifices by taking inspiration from their history, but it is sad that today minorities are being suppressed within their own country.

SGPC President specifically mentioned that at present, conspiracies are being made to snatch the minority status of Sikhs, but the Sikh community will not allow such mischievous acts to succeed. He said that the glorious history of the Sikh community shows the way to face the challenges of present



time and every Sikh should carry this history to the next generation. The SGPC is making great efforts to convey Sikh history to the young generation.

On this occasion, President of Chief Khalsa Diwan and Punjab state cabinet minister Dr. Inderbir Singh Nijjer said in his address that Sikh history is a guide for the youth and especially, the knowledge about the martyrs of Saragarhi is very important for children. Dr. Nijjer said that efforts will be made to include Saragarhi history in the school syllabus of Punjab School Education Board and these pages of history will also be taught to children in the schools.

Former Chief of the Army Staff General Jiginder Jaswant Singh (Retired) said that the Battle of Saragarhi is included in top 10 major battles of the world, because during this war, only 21 Sikh soldiers fought against 10 thousand tribesmen. He said Sikhs will always be proud of the bravery of the Sikh soldiers of this battle. On this occasion, President of Saragarhi Foundation, Gurinderpal Singh Josan thanked the prominent personalities and the Sangat.

President Murmu to attend Queen Elizabeth's funeral



President Droupadi Murmu will represent India at the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in London on September 19.

Murmu will be visiting London from September 17 to 19 to offer condolences on behalf of the Government of India.

Queen Elizabeth, the former head of state of the UK and Head of the Commonwealth of Nations, passed away on September 8.

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed condolences at the demise of Queen Elizabeth II.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visited the British High Commission in New Delhi on September 12 to convey India's condolences. India also observed a day of national mourning on Sunday (September 11).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had tweeted, "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will be remembered as a stalwart of our times. She provided inspiring leadership to her nation and people. She personified dignity and decency in public life. Pained by her demise. My thoughts are with her family and people of UK in this sad hour."

Farmers protest against proposed IIT campus in Goa

Farmers staged a protest against the proposed Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus in Goa, claiming the state government was acquiring land for it without their consent. After the farmers' protest on Monday in Sanguem area of South Goa district, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said some people had the habit of unnecessarily opposing projects.

Talking to reporters in state capital Panaji on Monday, Sawant said the land where the IIT was proposed belonged to the government and they will ensure no one faces injustice due to the project.

Farmers protested after team of state revenue officials

went to Sanguem to demarcate land for the upcoming IIT Goa campus. A team led by Deputy Superintendent of Police Nilesh Rane tried to pacify the farmers, but they went ahead with the protest.

The farmers have been reluctant to give their land for the project.

We have been cultivating paddy at the place where the government wants to acquire land for the IIT Goa campus. We don't want IIT, a woman farmer told police.

She claimed the state government was acquiring land without the consent of the farmers, who have been growing crops on it for generations. Some of the other protest-



ers said they will not allow the demarcation process to continue at the site.

The Sanguem police have registered a case against the protesting farmers for ob-

structing the land demarcation work, a senior police official said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Sawant said some people had the habit of unnecessarily opposing projects.

The land where the IIT is proposed belongs to the government. Some people are just encroaching the land, he said adding that people should shun the negative mindset.

We will ensure people do not face any injustice. If someone is a tenant or has a document to prove his/her (land) ownership, they can submit it to the district collector, the chief minister said.

Sanguem BJP MLA Subhash Phal Dessai said the IIT campus in Goa will help in creating employment opportunities for locals.

Weaker sections have no hedge against inflation

The latest retail inflation data from the National Statistical Office is a sobering reminder that accelerating price gains still remain the single biggest challenge to policymakers as they try to steer Asia's third-largest economy to a more durable recovery from the pandemic-induced slump. Inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) quickened in August to a provisional 7%, from 6.7% in July, as the pace of gains in food prices as measured by the Consumer Food Price Index accelerated by a sizeable 93 basis points to 7.62%, from July's 6.69%. And rural consumers bore a disproportionately higher burden: with month-on-month changes in both food prices and overall inflation appreciably greater at 0.88% and 0.57% respectively, compared with the 0.50% and 0.46% rates of urban inflation. Of particular concern is that inflation in the prices of cereals — staple grains in every household — surged to 9.57% from the preceding month's 6.9% rate. Month-on-month the pace was a disconcerting 2.4%. The Finance Ministry has asserted that the increase in headline inflation was "moderate", even as it sought to downplay the significance of food price pressures by terming food and fuel prices as "transient components". It also pointed to the steps by the Government to cool prices. And it cited oils and fats and pulses as two items where prices had begun to ease in response to the Centre's steps. However, the prices of pulses and products quickened by 1.7% month-on-month. Services categories including housing, health, education, recreation and personal care too witnessed sequential increases in price gains. The challenge going forward would be for providers to tread carefully so as not to yet again depress consumption by raising prices too quickly. Policymakers would do well to heed the dictum of a former RBI Governor, who never tired of reiterating that 'containing the build up of price pressures is the best anti-poverty programme' as the poor 'have no hedge against inflation'.

LETTERBOX

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"SOMEONE'S SITTING IN THE SHADE TODAY BECAUSE SOMEONE PLANTED A TREE A LONG TIME AGO"
Warren Buffet

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MAHUA ACHARYA TELL HOW THE OUTCOME OF THE 'GRAND CHALLENGE 1' IS AN INNOVATIVE MODEL FOR INDIA AND THE WORLD

Climate action & cooperative federalism

India's procurement of 5,450 electric buses and subsequent increase in ambition to have 50,000 e-buses on the country's roads by 2030 represent the immense potential for progress on climate and development goals through close collaboration between the Union and State governments. With the shared aim to rapidly electrify a key pillar of India's public transportation, recent governance efforts have created a new business model for e-buses. If this sector is further developed, it can reduce air pollution in cities and fuel import bills, improve the balance sheets of State transport companies, and spur domestic manufacturing and job creation.

State of State-owned buses

There are currently around 1,40,000 registered public buses on India's roads, with large numbers of them having sputtering engines that spew planet-warming fumes into the atmosphere. At least 40,000 of these buses are at the end of their lifespan and must be taken off the roads immediately.

However, most buses are owned and operated by State transport undertakings, which are in poor financial health. In part, they incur large losses because they play an important social function by providing subsidised fares to crores of Indians each day. With a few exceptions such as Mumbai's Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking (BEST) of the Brihanmumbai Mahanagarपालिका, when State transport undertakings go to the market to buy buses, they face problems of fragmented demand and high prices. Furthermore, there are limitations to nation-wide action on this issue as State governments control issues such as transit, urban governance and pollution control.

A success story

Until recently, there had never been a unified



tender to address some of these challenges. Cooperative federalism can easily become a fraught issue. However, in the case of the Grand Challenge 1, a tender for 5,450 buses (across five major Indian cities — Kolkata, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Surat), the opposite happened. Instead of a race to the bottom, the respective expertise, strengths and needs of Union Ministries and States informed the process and the successful outcomes.

Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), a nodal agency of the Union government, acted as the programme manager in this effort at centralised procurement in concert, with State-led demand and customisation. Coordination between a range of Union government Ministries and State governments standardised demand conditions across these five cities and discovered prices that beat the increasingly outmoded internal combustion engines.

On a cost-per-kilometre basis, the prices discovered were 40% lower than diesel and 34% less than CNG (without factoring in the subsidy through FAME-ID). A note on FAME: the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of

(Hybrid & Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-India) Scheme was launched under the National Mission on Electric Mobility in 2011/National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020, and unveiled in 2013. The scheme encourages the progressive induction of reliable, affordable and efficient electric and hybrid vehicles.

With high fuel prices and energy security challenges in the wake of the war in Ukraine, the switch to electric vehicles appears even more sensible and lucrative.

This inflection point in unit economics was enabled by three key factors: collaboration, pace and transparency. First, the tender itself was a fully consultative process and varied contributions by participants already influenced the design of future tenders. Second, there was a shared sense of urgency that shaped this collaboration, which leveraged the bureaucracy's power when working on time-bound and measurable schemes and increased receptivity to creative and new ideas. Finally, transparency was the most resilient quality of a public process. From the outset, there was clarity about the intention to engender trust and build a publicly available process and tender that invited bids from automakers and operators.

In the wake of the first tender, it was incredibly gratifying to share a feeling of success with five States, five Transport Ministers, five State Secretaries and the heads of a range of State transport undertakings, each of whom had played a part in the process.

To be clear, excessive centralisation can have limitations and contradict the federal principles enshrined in the Constitution. For instance, India's States and districts vary vastly in their vulnerability to climate impacts, and decentralised decision-making and locally-led adaptation will help reduce potential damage to lives and livelihoods. Urban local bodies and

gram panchayats can be the heart of climate action.

However, in certain areas where India must move the needle quickly or where States lack size and financial clout, such as the electrification of mass mobility, centralised procurement and programme management can deliver architectural transformations rather than just incremental transitions.

There is much work ahead

Although a good start has been made, much work remains to be done to enable the electrification of mass mobility in India. The country's shift to clean public transportation will require a suite of efforts, from ramping up manufacturing capacity to domestic battery production to building out charging infrastructure (ideally plugged in to a grid powered by renewables) to capacity building of State transport undertakings to developing financial instruments and structures.

Nonetheless, the progress we have made on electric bus tendering is a harbinger of climate action made possible by cooperative federalism. As India now ramps up its demand to deploy 50,000 buses across 40 cities, it will need to continue the spirit of true inter-ministerial and Union-State collaboration to fulfil its ambitious targets for green and inclusive economic development. The combined clout and strength of the federal compact can enable large strides being made towards innovative models that not only improve transit, the quality of life in cities and progress towards national climate goals but also build models for the rest of the world to emulate.

Mahua Acharya is Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Convergence Energy Services Limited, Government of India. The views expressed are personal

The Brunt of Unpaid work! if women stop, the world will stop

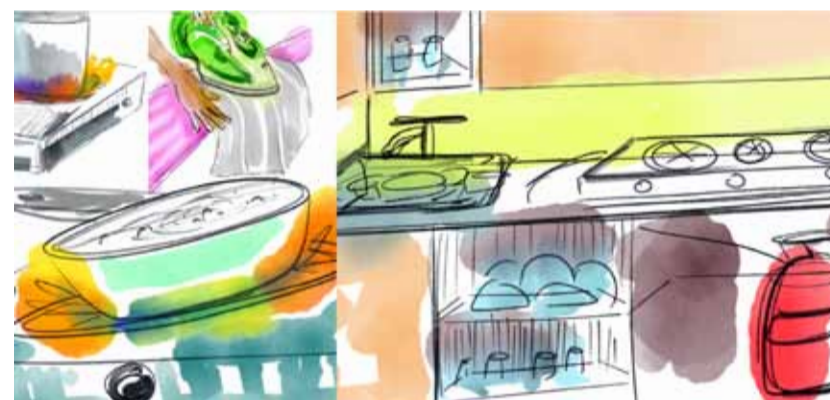


The invisibility and lack of recognition of unpaid domestic and care work result in gender inequality and women's disempowerment. According to the recent Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), women's participation in employment in India is low and significantly less than that of their male counterparts. Women comprised just 18% of the workforce compared to 52% of men before the pandemic. A Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) survey revealed that around 39% of women lost their jobs during the ongoing pandemic due to several reasons, including an increasing demand for unpaid domestic work put on them by their families. Globally, while unpaid domestic work by women is valued at nearly 13% of the total economy, in India, women's unpaid domestic work is estimated to be valued at almost 40% of its GDP. While women carry the Indian economy on their backs through their backbreaking domestic work and care work, it often goes unaccounted for as it is not considered productive labour.

This devaluation of women's work and its exclusion has led to the reinforcement of the gendered division of paid and unpaid labour, leaving women without wages and little bargaining power in the household and allowing the vicious circle to continue where men, economy, and country prosper at their expense.

It is argued that engagement in unpaid domestic and care work is one of the prime reasons for women's low participation in economic activities. Women do an average of 75% of the world's total unpaid care work. Women's unpaid domestic work is often invisible but has immense value. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a huge 16.4 billion hours are spent by women on unpaid care work daily. This is equivalent to two billion people working eight hours per day, without payment. The actual value of this work amounts to 9% of the global GDP, which is equivalent to \$11 trillion.

Similar differences also exist in women's time allocation to paid and unpaid work by geography. In rural areas, Indian women spend more time in unpaid activities in comparison to urban areas. Women are more likely to spend less time in unpaid work and men are less likely



to contribute to housework in northern states over southern states. Haryana is the most unequal among the Indian states with men aged between 15-59 spending just 15 minutes on unpaid housework every day while women of the same age do 269 minutes of unpaid housework. Social norms expect women to perform unpaid labour in India and the consequences for straying from the norm can be harsh. OXFAM India's 2019 household care survey found that one in three survey respondents thought that it was acceptable to beat a woman for failing to care well for the children or not attending to a dependent or ill adult member in the household. For failing to prepare a meal for the men in the family, 68% of survey respondents thought women should be harshly criticized and 41.2% thought they should be beaten. About 66% of the working women surveyed in Delhi by the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) reported an increase in household chores and 36% stated an increased burden of child and elderly care work during the pandemic.

In this Perspective, we discuss the societal, organisational, institutional and psychological factors that explain why time poverty is often under appreciated. We argue that scientists, policymakers and organisational leaders should devote more attention and resources toward understanding and reducing time poverty to promote psychological and economic well-being. Therefore, the strong message emerging is that policymakers and employers need to act fast to

reduce "time poverty" among women and push for greater gender equality in the labour market and an urgent need for gender budgeting.

The story of women in India being overburdened with unpaid work is centuries old. The time use survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) in 2020-21 confirms a persistent pattern of "time poverty" suffered by women in India. The NSSO survey showed that women spent 84% of their working hours on unpaid activities, while men spent 80% of their working hours on paid work. One of the repercussions of their unpaid work burden is their lack of participation in paid work. Indian women's participation in paid employment is much lower than their male counterparts. Only 21.8% of women aged 15-59 years were engaged in paid work in comparison to nearly 70.9% of the men. However, if we were to take into account both paid and unpaid work, women's participation reaches 85% men's is just 73%.

In 2019, the time spent by Indian women on unpaid work was 10 ten times more than men. TUS 2019 shows that women participation in unpaid domestic services for household members — cooking, cleaning, household management — is as high as 81.2 per cent each day compared with 26.1% for men. It also states that there is a wide gender disparity, with only 18.4% women participating in employment activities compared with 57.3% of men; also, while men spend an average of 459 minutes (7 hours and 39 minutes), women spend only

333 minutes (5 hours and 33 minutes). There is a stark difference in the time spent by men and women in caregiving activities for a dependent child or an adult. While only 14% of men participate in unpaid caregiving services for household members spending on average 76 minutes a day (1 hour and 16 minutes), the share of women (2 hours 14 minutes) is almost double at 27.6%.

Unlike in international TUS in India, the reporting of time spent on various activities was not done separately by each person in the household, but often by a central respondent for all members of the household. It is entirely possible that male respondents overstated their contributions to domestic chores and understated their wives' contributions to economically productive work.

In India, the 2021 state assembly elections offered a unique and unexpected opportunity for the recognition of women's UDCW through promises of unconditional cash transfers. However, direct benefit transfers (DBT) are not a magic bullet for achieving women's economic empowerment. There is a fundamental need to secure an adequate financial infrastructure and financial literacy. Although some of the negative consequences anticipated by the critics of such transfers were not borne out in reality, it was noted that the patriarchal social norms around UDCW are so deeply entrenched that explicit feminist messaging on the part of the government is necessary to shift social norms towards the recognition and eventual reduction and redistribution of UDCW. In short, unconditional cash transfers like the scheme are an innovative means of recognising women's UDCW which could potentially rewrite the relationship between women and the Indian welfare state and hold critical insights for international debates on the vexed relation between paid work, unpaid work, and social reproduction. LFPR should increase. Females should not be replaced by men rather more employment opportunities should be increased for both to absorb the increasing population.

Dr. Harvinder Kaur, Associate Professor in Economics, Ambala, views are personal.

BOOKS: REVIEW

New book highlights silent movement reforms post '91

A big boost to literacy is the only way to sustain the gains of the 1991 reforms and raise the quality and level of migrant workers' lives in the soft underbelly of the big cities, felt academics and administrators while many aspects of a book by educationist Manimala Roy's new book

The speakers concurred with Roy's contention that schooling opened up new opportunities for children of the uprooted workers in the unorganised sector and that in turn raised the community's economic and social status

According to the author, the 1991 economic reforms unleashed a silent revolution in the festering city slums. Migrant workers saw the possibility of a large number

of white-collar jobs being available to their children once liberalisation opened up many sectors of the economy. With some education, they knew, their children would be able to land low-level jobs in sectors like telecom, civil aviation, retail and automobiles

Buoyed by such prospects, they sent their children to school, often private schools, paying hefty tuition fees. Without any government intervention a quiet social movement took off with far-reaching consequences

As a result, the country's literacy scene got a new boost, the blows of child labour were softened and within a generation the migrant community moved up socially and economically with their children becoming part of

'Big economists write books that are full of useful statistics, we quote them, but Dr Roy's book is written from the heart and reads like a real-life story'

the organised sector

This story has been traced, researched and chronicled by Roy in her book "From Shanties to School", published by Konark Publishers Pvt Ltd

During the discussion at the India International Centre on Friday, Former ambassador Reena Pandey said the book effectively conveyed the impulses for literacy growth in the distressed slums

Terming the development as



From Shanties to School: A Silent Movement
By Manimala Roy
Konark Publishers
264 pages; Rs650

a "moving story of the underprivileged living on the fringes of Delhi's urban society", she said this was a heartening trend

The former Indian Foreign Service officer, who once served in Nepal, said even in the Himalayan kingdom a robust literacy campaign had been launched with liberal Indian aid

C B Sharma of IGNOU talked about the need for inducting technology into the literacy drive to give it a new dimension

"Big economists write books that are full of useful statistics, we quote them, but Dr Roy's book is

written from the heart and reads like a real-life story," he remarked

He said the new education policy that is on the anvil will have a big focus on the grassroots realities and the problem of the first-generation literates in accessing education

Roy said what gave the book its real value was the use of a huge amount of primary data she collected from case studies in the city slums

Renu Tomar, deputy registrar of Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University, called for participation of the entire academic community in the literacy movement. She said though the book is packed with useful statistics it grips the reader because of its literary quality.

The economic reforms of 1991 unleashed a silent revolution with many migrant workers realising the possibility of their children getting good education and being able to do white-collar jobs.

Shell plans to install over 10,000 charging points across India by 2030

FW DESK

Shell launched its first electric vehicle (EV) chargers in India, for the four-wheeler and two-wheeler segments in Bengaluru today. India is the first market for Shell to launch chargers for two-wheelers. The company plans to set up more than 10,000 charging points across India by 2030 and aims to provide safe, green, and integrated mobility solutions to its customers through the Shell Recharge Stations. The power on the Shell Recharge chargers is 100% green energy[1]

In the first phase of its launch, Shell plans to set up charging stations in Bengaluru across its fuel stations located in Yeshwantpur, Marathalli, Old Madras Road, Brookefield and Kanakpura. The com-



pany has plans to expand its EV charging infrastructure beyond its existing retail markets of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, Assam, Andhra Pradesh. Shell will provide customized charging solutions at on-the-go locations such as Shell fuel

stations, standalone EV hubs, home charging and destination locations. For on-the-go and standalone EV hubs, the company will deploy 100 kilowatts (KW) and above direct-current (DC) fast chargers to enable fast charging and the lowest possible dwell time.

Customers will be able to operate these chargers through the 'Shell Recharge India app', available on both Android and iOS operating systems. The app provides a hassle-free, reliable EV charging experience to customers, allowing them to locate the nearest available charger, pick a charging method - by unit, time or by percentage and then make quick payments.

Customers can also view their charging status on a real-time basis. Shell has a full product range of hardware solutions for different cases, such as providing capabilities around:

Simultaneous charging and cable connector configuration strategy - to increase the Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) utilization and improve investment efficiency

Modular designs enabling

capabilities around upgrades Reliability and operation excellence ensuring higher uptime

Commenting on the launch, Sanjay Varkey, Director, Shell Mobility, India, said, "Being a solution-driven and customer-centric organization, we have developed a world-class offering for the electric-mobility customers drawing upon our global expertise and capabilities. The Shell Recharge proposition is based on unique insights that we picked up in our research and global experience. This enables us to provide safe, green, and integrated mobility solutions to our customers. We are excited to contribute to the electrification of mobility in India by rolling out the Shell Recharge network and look forward to serve the rapidly evolving needs of our customers."

EESL launches 5-star rated ceiling fans with brushless DC technology in India

FW DESK

With the aim to augment its sustainability initiatives, Energy Efficiency Private Limited (EESL), has launched 5-star rated ceiling fans with brushless DC (BLDC) technology in India under the UJALA programme. These fans have been launched after the success of its pilot project, wherein EESL had procured 1 lakh BLDC fans. As a result, 16 MU of energy savings per annum were achieved as well as 6 crore monetary savings yearly. The BLDC fans have a sweep size of 1200 mm with a power input varying from 28 W - 32 W as compared to the 70 - 75 W of power consumed by conventional ceiling fans. The programme will leapfrog the current energy efficiency lev-



els and minimize the cooling related electricity demand and associated climate threats. EESL further plans to come up with a tender for additional procurement of 1 Lakh BLDC fans soon.

EESL has distributed over 23.5 lakh energy efficient fans under Energy Efficient Fan Programme across India. With the rapid urbanization, growing

temperatures and increase in per capita income, the need for cooling solutions is poised to rise multi-fold in the coming years. This will subsequently trigger a surge in power demand. Given India's nascency in the clean energy sector, energy efficient fans are the most optimum and cost-effective solution for reducing electricity consumption.

Flipkart encourages customers to give their homes a makeover with its #HomeFlipover campaign

FW DESK

Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, launched its new home campaign #HomeFlipover to showcase its wide selection of high-quality home products, perfect for a home transformation. Driven by customer insights, Flipkart aims to reach women across the country, offering them the ease of shopping premium brands at an affordable price. Flipkart's #HomeFlipover campaign has brought on board an array of the best possible finds with carefully curated home inspiration to make brick and mortar buildings feel like home. The latest collection features products including bedsheets, curtains, showpieces, plants, cutlery, cookware, home improvement tools, among others.



KONE upbeat on expansion in North India; Opens office in Ludhiana

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Ludhiana

KONE Elevators India, a fully owned subsidiary of KONE Corporation, a global leader in the elevator and escalator industry, has expanded its presence in North India with the opening of a sales and service office in Ludhiana today.

Located at SCF 41, Rajguru Nagar, Ludhiana, Punjab, this new facility covers all aspects such as sales, installation, service, Annual Maintenance Contract and modernization, to support increasing customer demand and expectations in Ludhiana. It will also serve as a complete and seamless experience for their customers.

Speaking at the press conference, Amit Gossain, Managing Director, KONE Elevators India shared, "With the Indian economy growing, increased urbanization and projects like affordable housing, we see good opportunities. Ludhiana is one



of the fastest progressing districts of Punjab, and has shown a significant rise in the number of industries in the recent years. KONE India already enjoys a good reach in this market. And with this new facility, we will get even closer to our Customers in Ludhiana. North India and the surrounding areas are a very important market for us and this new office is in accordance with our strategy of 'Sustainable success with customers' to ensure a stronger connect with them in this area. We work closely with our customers and partners which helps create great experiences for visitors and residents alike."

Trident bags Gold Award for its health and safety standards

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

With an aspiration to strengthen the wealth-generating capacity of the Paper, Energy & Chemical businesses in an extremely competitive and dynamic environment, the world's largest wheat straw based paper manufacturer, Trident Group, has been employing a vast number of practices to make its operations with due regard to the health & safety of its members. Committed to providing a safe environment for its members, the group has designed health and safety measures keeping in mind the attainment of a top-notch work environment across the globe.

Honouring the efforts taken by the group, Trident has been awarded 'Gold Award' Under Apex India Occupational Health & Safety Award 2022 by Chetan Singh (Health Minister, Govt. Of Punjab), Major General (Retd.) P.K. Saighal (Defense Expert of India & TEDx Speaker), Kulwant Singh Pandori (M.L.A. SAS Nagar



Punjab), Dr. Avneesh Singh (Director General (Rtd.) DGFASLI (Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes), Ministry of Labour & Employment) (Govt. Of India)

Striving for continual improvement in Product Quality, OHS & EMS performance through teamwork, the group has adopted cutting-edge technologies, acquired relevant skills and competency towards effective business growth and development. To contribute to sustainable development, circulation of lagging & leading indicators on a monthly basis is done. Implementation of disciplinary action SOP for

EHS violations is strictly followed and special safety drives to create awareness amongst the members for zero (fire & safety) incidents are organised. Nonetheless, the importance of mock drills and regular interaction with the team is taken care of to promote a safe workplace.

"At Trident Group, we are delighted to be recognised for our efforts in promoting a safe and healthy work culture. For the same, easy access to all safety systems on mobile has been provided to every member. After all, our members are the purpose of the organisation's existence", said Om, EHS Head.

Samsung sets goal to attain 100% clean energy by 2050

Samsung Electronics is shifting away from fossil fuels and aiming to entirely power its global operations with clean electricity by 2050, a challenging goal that experts say could be hampered by South Korea's modest climate change commitments.

South Korea-based Samsung is a top producer of computer memory chips and smartphones and, by some estimates, the biggest energy consumer among hundreds of global companies that have joined the RE100 campaign to get 100 per cent of electricity from renewable sources like wind or solar power.

In announcing its target on Thursday the company said it aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions across its mobile device, display panel and consumer electronics divisions by 2030, and across all global operations including semiconductors by 2050.

It plans to invest 7 trillion won (USD 5 billion) through 2030 on projects aimed at reducing emissions from process



gases, controlling and recycling electronic waste, conserving water and minimizing pollutants.

It plans to develop new technologies to reduce power consumption in consumer electronics devices and data centers, which would require more efficient memory chips. It also will set long-term goals to reduce emissions in supply chains and logistics.

Samsung is responding to the threats of climate change with a comprehensive plan that includes reducing emissions, new sustainability practices and the development of innovative technologies and products that are better for our planet, Jong-Hee Han, the company's CEO, said in an emailed statement.

Malnutrition can be reduced by combating nutritional food insecurity, says FFRC-FSSAI Director Inoshi Sharma

FW DESK

In order to meet health demands, we need to focus on the Fortification process and understand how nutrient-rich food will reach consumers. We must know what nutritional value is added after food products leave the farm, according to Ms. Inoshi Sharma, Director, FFRC-FSSAI, spoke at the National Conference of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) on Achieving Nutritional Security Through Agri-Nutri-Food Value Chain.

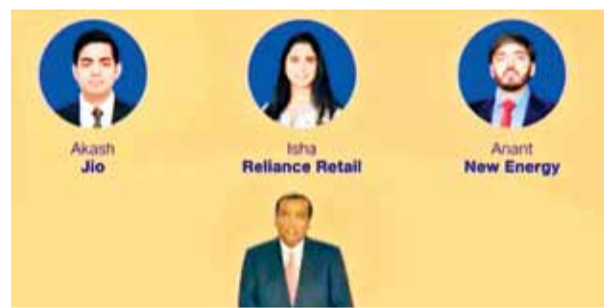
For food conservation, it is important to save the produce and have a proper food waste management system. She further added that by aligning with the International Millets Day 2023, we need to revive traditional foods such as millets in our dietary habits. All sections of society need to undergo change to achieve food security.

Reliance can explore reorganising company to list subsidiaries: Report

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd can explore reorganisation of the company into three independent entities for different business verticals as it prepares to list subsidiaries and induct next-generation of founding family into key roles, a report said.

This, a report by Kotak Institutional Equities, would help prevent any holding company discount in Reliance as and when its subsidiaries list, prepare for eventual management change and preclude inter-linkages between entities as and when they become independent, listed entities. India's most valuable company has three distinct businesses - oil refining and petrochemicals business house in oil-to-chemicals (O2C) unit, digital business including telecom and retail.

"Reliance can explore reorganisation of the company into three independent entities for its three different business verticals as it prepares to list its subsidiaries and induct next-generation members of the founding family into key roles," the report said. Company



management and shareholders meeting last month, Ambani identified his twin children Akash and Isha for digital and retail respectively and youngest son Anant for energy business.

"We note that our hypothetical structure of three independent listed entities instead of four listed entities (Reliance + three listed subsidiaries in communications, energy, retailing) or three listed entities (Reliance + two listed subsidiaries in communications and retailing) will prevent potential large holding company discount for Reliance stock relative to the value of its assets in the parent entity and holdings in various subsidiaries.

Program partners Pfizer Limited, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, Social Alpha, Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), IIT-Delhi and AGNI, with UN Health Innovation Exchange (UNHIEX) as the knowledge partner, today announced the six winners of the first edition of Pfizer INDOvation incubation initiative for healthcare start-ups. The focus is on oncology and digital health, because of the increasing burden of cancer in India and the emerging use of digital health to ensure better patient outcomes. The six winners who will be given

Six start-ups in Oncology and Digital Health to receive grants of 65 lacs each under Pfizer's INDOvation Program

FW DESK

Program partners Pfizer Limited, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, Social Alpha, Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), IIT-Delhi and AGNI, with UN Health Innovation Exchange (UNHIEX) as the knowledge partner, today announced the six winners of the first edition of Pfizer INDOvation incubation initiative for healthcare start-ups. The focus is on oncology and digital health, because of the increasing burden of cancer in India and the emerging use of digital health to ensure better patient outcomes. The six winners who will be given

a grant of Rs. 65 lacs each will receive incubation support from AIM, NITI Aayog and IIT Delhi. Pfizer will provide the grant as well as mentorship and technical assistance to the start-ups and Social Alpha will provide program acceleration support.

This incubation program, launched in April 2022, which will run for two years, will help to accelerate the lab-to-market journey of these winning startups. Apart from the grant, this support will include product engineering and development services, clinical validation guidance, regulatory advisory, identification of market access opportunities and catalytic cross-industrial collaborations.

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Bees pollinate 80 percent of the world's agricultural crops. That is why the great scientist Albert Einstein once stated that if the bees became extinct, then life on earth would end in no time. The overuse of pesticides is causing immense harm to the beekeeping units in Punjab

The pets of royal families also live in royal style, even if they are as small as bees. On the demise of Queen Elizabeth in Britain, Buckingham Palace's pet royal bees were informed in a secret manner. The little insects were given this news in a traditional way. The beekeepers informed the bees that the Queen had died and that Prince Charles was becoming the new King. For this, the message was narrated in a low voice after tying a black cloth around the boxes of pet bees. This is an age-old tradition and every time on the death of a king or queen, a

similar message is conveyed. It is believed that if the message of death is not given to the bees properly, then they die.

In the changing times, honey is now considered a healthy alternative to white sugar. Did you know that to produce one kilogram of honey, bees have to visit more than two million flowers to collect pollen from them? It is also a known fact that 80 percent of the world's crops are pollinated by bees only. That's why the great scientist Albert Einstein once said that if the bees became extinct, then life on earth would end

Why are beekeepers of Punjab worried?

in no time. If crops were not pollinated in due time, food production would stop and life would be in jeopardy due to starvation. That is why it is said that for life to continue on the earth, it is necessary to protect all animals and plants. Every insect or plant has some important role to play in the ecosystem.

The businessmen associated with the trade of beekeeping in Punjab are facing a big problem. Their domesticated bees are dying very fast and the reason behind this is being told that pesticides are being used indiscriminately by the farmers to increase the yield of millet, sunflower, paddy, etc., which is proving to be fatal for the bees community and they are ending a life prematurely. In fact, the boxes which are used for beekeeping are moved to the states of Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab from time to time according to different crop cycles. Their location is changed so

that the bees keep getting pollen grains in abundance and for this, they do not have to travel far. Sunflower cultivation is high in Haryana, so bee boxes are shifted to Haryana during the sunflower crop season. Bajra (pearl millet) is cultivated more in Rajasthan, so the boxes are also taken to Rajasthan. The people associated with the beekeeping business of Punjab have demanded from the state government that such guidelines should be issued that pesticides should not be used on crops more than a prescribed limit, otherwise the units and businessmen involved in honey production will suffer huge losses.

The world economy was hit hard due to the outbreak of the pandemic in the last two years, after which the invasion of Russian troops in Ukraine took place. This unusual and protracted war has shaken the economies of European countries. Not only European, most of the big nations of the world



including the USA and Australia have come under the grip of the global recession. The next two-three years are going to pass like this. Thankfully, India's economy is not in that bad shape. Looking at cosmetics sales data and women's shopping patterns, economy experts have concluded that the recession has really hit the world. It has been seen that US women are buying more lipsticks than ever before.

Lipstick is considered a cheap item and their higher sales than other cosmetics indicate that women are opting for lipsticks instead of buying expensive cosmetics for their makeup. In the US and Europe, sales of cosmetics such as lipsticks have grown by 70

percent this year. Compared to other items, the price of lipstick has increased less. Renowned entrepreneur Leonard Loder first used the term Lipstick Index during the recession of 2001. Then in the uncertain economic environment, women were turning to cheap beauty products. Economic experts are linking the increased demand for lipsticks to the economic uncertainty in the world.

There is one more worry. One of the major consequences of spending more time on mobile and TV screens is that users get myopia. 21 percent of children aged between 5 and 15 years in India and 32 percent of adolescents in other countries of the world suffer from myopia. It is estimated that by 2050, half of the world's population may suffer from this eye problem. Due to long hours of staring at the mobile screen in the dark of night or in low light, there is a lot of stress on the eyes and the blue light of the mobile weakens the

muscles of the eyes, causing the problem of nearsightedness. One solution to this is not to stare at the same screen for hours in a row. If you have to do some important work, then give rest to the eyes in between. Keep changing the screen, that is, sometimes work on mobile, sometimes on a laptop, and sometimes on your desktop computer. When the eyes get to rest in this way, then there will not be so many problems in the eyes as it could be otherwise. In China, the situation has become such that 80 percent of adolescents who have completed 12 years of schooling have become victims of myopia. Because of this, suitable candidates are not being found there for the recruitment of pilots in the armed forces. In China, it is mandatory for all youth to serve in the army for a few years, but due to poor eyesight, pilots cannot be recruited and there is also a problem in recruitment in other departments of the army as well.

IIM Udaipur features in Global Rankings consecutively for 4 yrs



FW DESK

Indian Institute of Management Udaipur set an unparalleled benchmark in education by featuring in the prestigious FT Masters in Management 2022 Global Ranking at the 81st Rank for its two-year MBA program. The FT MIM ranking 2022 lists the top global colleges in management education, wherein in the top 100, only four IIMs were featured - IIM Bangalore (31st Rank), IIM Lucknow (64 Rank), IIM Udaipur (81 Rank), and IIM Indore (89 rank), respectively. Established in 2011, IIM Udaipur is the youngest of all IIMs that made it to the Top 100 Ranking. What makes IIM Udaipur even more unique and notable is that it is only the 2nd IIM along with IIM Bangalore to be in the prestigious Global Ranking consecutively for the 4th Year, i.e. since 2019.

Asian shares mostly higher after wobbly gains on Wall St

Shares were mostly higher in Asia on Thursday after a wobbly day of trading yielded modest gains on Wall Street.

US futures inched up while oil prices were mixed. Shanghai's benchmark lost 1 per cent to 3,204.93 after China's central bank left its benchmark lending rate unchanged. While other major economies are raising rates to cool inflation, China's economy has been slowing and inflation remains moderate.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.5 per cent to 27,946.20. Japan reported a record trade deficit for the month of August, driven by high costs for imports of energy and other commodities and a weak yen. But analysts said they expect a rebalancing in coming months.

Motor vehicle production should continue to normalise as supply chain disruptions ease, while commodity price growth has eased even further," Darren Tay of Capital Economics said in



a commentary. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng index was 0.5 per cent higher, at 18,941.04, while the Kospi in Seoul edged 0.1 per cent higher to 2,413.07.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.6 per cent to 6,869.60.

Trading was tentative in New York on Wednesday, a day after the market's worst drop in two years, which was set off by fears that higher interest rates could cause a recession.

A report on inflation at the wholesale level showed prices are still rising rapidly, with pressures building underneath the surface, even if overall inflation slowed. It echoed a report on inflation at the consumer level Tuesday, which raised expectations for interest-rate hikes and triggered a rout for markets.

The S&P 500 added 0.3 per cent Wednesday to 3,946.01, while the Dow inched 0.1 per

cent higher, to 31,135.09. The Nasdaq gained 0.7 per cent to 11,719.68, and the Russell 2000 picked up 0.4 per cent to close at 1,838.46.

Traders now see a one-in-four chance the Fed may hike its benchmark rate by a full percentage point next week, quadruple the usual move, according to CME Group. A day earlier, it was closer to a one-in-three chance. The site puts the probability of a three-quarter percentage point increase now at 76 per cent, up from 69 per cent on Tuesday.

The central bank has already raised its benchmark interest rate four times this year, with the last two increases by three-quarters of a percentage point.

The Fed is taking the aggressive action on interest rates to try and cool the hottest inflation in four decades.

Tuesday's report on high prices jolted the market with signs that inflation is entering a

more stubborn phase that could require an already resolute Fed to become more aggressive.

Wall Street is especially worried that the rate hikes could go too far in slowing the economy and send it into a recession. The Fed is trying to avoid that outcome, but the latest inflation reports suggest that is becoming a more difficult task.

The broader US economy has been slowing, but consumers have remained resilient and the job market remains strong. Wall Street will get another update on inflation's latest impact on spending when the government releases its retail sales report for August on Thursday.

The market is also monitoring US-China tensions and war in Ukraine, while business and government officials are bracing for the possibility of a nationwide rail strike at the end of this week that could paralyze an already discombobulated supply chain.

FinMin Nirmala Sitharaman Chairs 26th meeting of the Financial Stability & Development Council

FW DESK

The 26th Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was chaired by the Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

The Council, inter alia, deliberated on the Early Warning Indicators for the economy and our preparedness to deal with them, improving the efficiency of the existing Financial/Credit Information Systems, issues of governance and management in Systemically Important Financial Institutions including Financial Market Infrastructures, strengthening cyber security framework in financial sector, Common KYC for all financial Services and related matters, update on Account Aggregator and next steps, Issues relating to financing of Power Sector, strategic role of GIFT IFSC in New Aatmanirbhar Bharat, inter-regulatory Issues of GIFT-IFSC, and need for utilisation of the services of Registered Valuers by all Government Departments. It was noted that there is a



need to monitor the financial sector risks, the financial conditions and market developments on a continuous basis by the Government and the regulators so that appropriate and timely action can be taken so as to mitigate any vulnerability and strengthen financial stability.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad, MoS (Finance), Pankaj Chaudhary, MoS (Finance); Shaktikanta Das, Governor, Reserve Bank of India; Dr. T. V. Somanathan, Finance Secretary and Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance; Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance; Tarun Bajaj, Secretary, Department of Revenue, Ministry

of Finance; Sanjay Malhotra, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance; Dr. V. Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance; Madhabi Puri Buch, Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Board of India; Debasish Panda, Chairperson, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India; Supratim Bandyopadhyay, Chairperson, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority; Ravi Mittal, Chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India; Injeti Srinivas, Chairperson, International Financial Services Centres Authority, and the Secretary of the FSDC, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.

Chinese loan apps: ED freezes over Rs 46-cr worth funds kept in payment gateway accounts

Enforcement Directorate on Friday said it has frozen Rs 46.67 crore funds of merchant entities kept in four online payment gateway accounts of Easebuzz,

Razorpay, Cashfree and Paytm after it carried out raids this week against a "Chinese-controlled" investment token app. The funds have been frozen under the anti-money laundering law. The latest action comes after the agency earlier this month raided the Bengaluru premises of Razorpay, Paytm and Cashfree over alleged irregularities in the operations of instant app-based loan giving companies "controlled" by Chinese persons and later similar seizure order for Rs 17 crore funds kept in their accounts was issued.

Air India to induct 30 planes over next 15 months

Air India on Monday said it will progressively induct 30 new aircraft, including 5 wide-body Boeing planes, from December this year, as the Tata-owned airline looks to boost its domestic and international services.

The airline has signed leases and letters of intent for inducting 5 wide-body Boeing and 25 Airbus narrow-body planes over the next 15 months.

"These new aircraft, which will enter service from late 2022, will increase the airline's fleet by over 25 per cent. Not counting the 10 long-grounded narrow-body and 6 wide-body aircraft that have been returned to service in recent months, these new aircraft mark the first major fleet expansion since Air India's acquisition by the Tata Group earlier this year," it said in a release. The planes being leased include 21 Airbus A320 neos, 4 Airbus A321 neos and 5 Boeing B777-200LRs.

The B777-200LRs will join the fleet between December



2022 and March 2023. They will be deployed on routes from Indian metro cities to the US.

"Mumbai will see the addition of flights to San Francisco as well as to both of the New York area's international airports, Newark Liberty and John F Kennedy, while Bangalore will receive a 3x weekly service to San Francisco.

"These aircraft will result in Air India offering Premium Economy haul flights for the first time," the statement said.

According to the release, the 4 A321 neo aircraft are

expected to join the fleet in the first quarter of calendar year 2023, while the 21 A320 neos will be inducted in the second half of 2023.

These aircraft will be deployed on domestic sectors as well as for short-haul international destinations.

"After a long time without significant growth, Air India is delighted to resume expanding its fleet and global footprint. These new aircraft, together with existing aircraft being returned to service, address an immediate need for more capacity and connectivity, and

mark a strong step forward," Air India CEO and Managing Director Campbell Wilson said.

Currently, the airline's narrow-body fleet stands at 70 aircraft. Out of them, 54 are in service and the remaining 16 aircraft will progressively return to service by early 2023. Air India's wide-body fleet stands at 43 aircraft, of which 33 are operational. The rest will return to service by early 2023.

Alchip Technologies Sets Record First Half Revenue and Net Income

FW DESK

Alchip Technologies sets revenue and net income records for the first half of 2022 and record revenue for Q2 2022. First half revenue reached a record \$194.6 million, while net income for the same period achieved a record \$30.5 million.

Second quarter 2022 revenue notched another record of \$101.1 million, up 3.9 per cent over the \$97.4 million from Q2 2021 and up 8.2 per cent over Q1 2022 revenue of \$93.5 million. At the same time, second quarter net income reached \$14.5 million, up 4.3 per cent over Q2 2021 net income of \$13.9 million, but fell short of Q1 2022 net income of \$16 million by 9.5 per cent. Second quarter operating income was reported at \$19.3 million, a 10.7 per cent increase over Q2 2021 operating income of \$17.5 million, but down slightly from Q1 2022 results of \$19.6 million. Earnings per share for Q2 2022 were NTD 6.0. Revenue for Q2 came in mildly lower than expected, due to ABF substrate supply constraints. Design demand, however, remained robust with no demand weakening in sight amid a slowing macro-environment.

Laying out the company's view going forward, Alchip President and CEO, Johnny Shen announced that strong mass production demand remains unchanged and that the company would maintain its hallmark advanced technology leadership.

"We're seeing our highest business inquiries for advanced technology 7nm, 6nm, 5nm and 4nm opportunities. This is on top of the fact that our announcement of accepting 3nm design created a great deal of interest in the high-performance computing and AI communities. In addition, we are experiencing significant market penetration in a number of automotive applications," he said.

India fared well on energy front despite global crises, says Petroleum Minister Hardeep Puri

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday said that despite global crises, India has fared well on energy, food and fuel fronts. Addressing the 25th Energy Technology Meet in

Mumbai, he said that despite the unique challenges posed by the current global setting, India is wedded to the concept of net zero and is committed to making a transition from

the world of hydrocarbons to a world where green and sustainable energy will be determining our energy needs. Puri further said that the country's per capita energy consumption is

one-third of global average now and will surpass it in the years to come. "India is on a path to become a \$10 trillion economy in 2030 and third largest economy in the world by 2047 and therefore, there is a growing need to

change the energy mix," the minister added. He reiterated the Government's resolve to not let anything undermine commitments towards green transition. "By May 2022, India had already attained 10

per cent biofuel blending and is now on course to reach the 20 per cent mark in a year or two," Puri said later during a media interaction.

HDFC Life Insurance stock rises 2% on Abrdn stake sale news

Shares of HDFC Life Insurance Company surged 2 per cent in morning trade after the UK-based investment company Abrdn said it is planning to sell 4.3 crore shares in the private sector insurer through block deal.

Abrdn is planning to sell up to 4.3 crore shares representing 2 per cent of HDFC Life's outstanding shares through a block deal to raise over Rs 2,425 crore.

On BSE, HDFC Life stock opened at Rs 601, then gained 2.60 per cent to touch Rs 606 in initial deals.

Similar movement was seen on the NSE as well, where shares of the company opened at Rs 605 apiece, then touched Rs 589.95, up 1.97 per cent from its previous closing price.

The Edinburgh-based company, which was formerly known as Standard Life Aberdeen, has offered the shares in the price band of Rs 564.1-578.55, which is a discount of up to 2.5 per cent on the



scrip's close on Monday in the block deal.

The shareholding of Abrdn, one of the promoters of the insurer, will fall to 1.7 per cent after the trade is executed from the present 3.7 per cent, as per the term sheet. Mortgage major HDFC, the other promoter in the private sector insurer, will continue to hold 48.7 per cent of the company. BofA Securities is the sole bookrunner for the sale of shares. At the lower end of the offer price range, Abrdn will be booking an income of Rs 2,425.6 crore or USD 305 million.

IOC gives Rs 50 crore for Cheetah relocation project



India's top oil firm IOC will give Rs 50.22 crore towards funding the ambitious trans-continental relocation of Cheetahs from Africa to India, the company said on Tuesday.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for meeting two-thirds of the Rs 75 crore project cost.

"Under the aegis of the NTCA and powered by IOC, the ambitious Cheetah Reintroduction Project is set to welcome the first Cheetahs on Indian

soil after over seven decades on September 17, 2022," the company said in a statement. IOC is the first and only corporate to come forward to support 'Project Cheetah' through CSR.

Under this project, a source population of 15-20 Cheetahs will be flown in from Namibia and South Africa and will be introduced at Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh.

IOC will be contributing Rs 50.22 crore over five years for cheetah reintroduction as well as its habitat management and protection, ecology develop-

ment, staff training and veterinary healthcare. The cheetah population in India dwindled during the 19th century, largely because of bounty hunting by local kings and ruling British officials. The last three Asiatic cheetahs were hunted down in 1948 and the cheetah was declared extinct in the country in 1952. The subspecies of cheetah which got extinct in India was Asiatic Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*) and the subspecies being introduced in the country is the African Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*). Research has shown that the genes of these two subspecies are the same. On August 2, IOC said it had signed a MoU with NTCA for the transcontinental relocation of Cheetah in its historical range in India. The MoU was signed by S M Vaidya, Chairman, IOC and S P Yadav, Addl. Director General (Project Tiger) and Member Secretary (NTCA).

Tesla installs record 4K EV supercharger stations globally

Tesla, an undisputed leader in the electric car market, has installed nearly 4,000 supercharger stations globally, growing 34% year-on-year.

According to data compiled by Finbold, Tesla had 3,971 supercharger stations globally, recording a growth of 33.88 per cent from the 2,966 recorded during a similar period in 2021. During the first three months of 2022, the Tesla stations stood at 3,724, representing a growth of 7.13 per cent from the previous quarter. In total, during Q3 2021, the company had installed 3,254 stations globally.



Elsewhere, Tesla also witnessed a spike in the number of supercharger connectors, which stood at 36,165 during Q2 2022, representing a YoY growth of 34.44 per cent. During the first quarter of 2022, the connectors stood at 33,657, growing 6.85 per cent from 31,498 in Q4 2021. Tesla managed to record growth in the supercharger segment despite operating in a period marred by the economic effects emanating from the pandemic. "Interestingly, Tesla has managed to record supercharger growth despite facing challenges mainly from the chip shortage. Notably, in recent years, charging infrastructure companies raised concerns due to chip shortage factors derailing the momentum of rolling out public charging options," according to the Finbold report. Overall, Tesla is likely to accelerate the installation of supercharger stations as the company adopts innovative technologies to reach more locations.

Mahindra Lifespace to buy land parcels with sales potential of Rs 3,000-4,000 cr in FY23

Realty firm Mahindra Lifespace Developers is looking to acquire a few land parcels this fiscal to build housing projects with sales potential of Rs 3,000-4,000 crore, a top company official said. The company will acquire these land parcels either through outright purchase or by forming Joint Development Agreements (JDAs) with landowners.

Mumbai-based Mahindra Lifespace Developers Ltd, part of Mahindra Group, is one of the leading real estate players in the country. The company's market cap recently touched USD 1 billion (about Rs 8,000 crore).

In an interview with PTI, the company's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Arvind Subramanian said Mahindra Lifespace

is looking to acquire new land parcels for business expansion in three focus cities – Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Pune and Bengaluru. He highlighted that the company already acquired a land parcel this fiscal that has a Gross Development Value (GDV) of Rs 1,700 crore and the deal pipelines are strong. "Last year, I had set a guidance of Rs 2,500 crore worth of new land acquisition. All these numbers are GDV, so the sales value of the new land that we acquire and not the cost of land acquisition. We did Rs 3,800 crore last fiscal year and this year we have already done Rs 1,700 crore. We will certainly be doing at least an equivalent amount in the rest of the year," Subramanian said.

In terms of the GDV, he

said the new land acquisition should be in Rs 3,000-4,000 crore range and the company was well above the guidance in creating new business development opportunities.

Mahindra Lifespace Developers in July informed about acquisition of a new land parcel in Pune, which has a development potential of 2.1 million square feet with an estimated sales value of Rs 1,700 crore.

On increasing competition among large players for land acquisition, Subramanian said: "There is a lot of heightened interest in land and developers are getting very active. But at the same time the landowners have also become much more

selective about which developers they want to do business with..."

Five years back, he said, landowners would simply give land to whoever give the highest, bid but not any more.

"Now landowners realise that people may have given the highest bid but they are not able to complete the transaction

because they are not able to get financial closure. So many landowners are saying: look, I will only do business with a larger, more well-established developer, corporate developers so that I can have surety that my deal will get completed," Subramanian said.

On the operational front, Mahindra Lifespace is targeting a

2.5-fold jump in its annual sales bookings to Rs 2,500 crore in the next three years.

The company had achieved sales bookings of Rs 1,028 crore in the last financial year.

"The first quarter has set us up very well for the year. We are expecting very strong continued growth in quarter two and the rest of the year as well. We will certainly be above our FY22 numbers. The question is how much above, which time will tell, but we are extremely positive," he said.

The company clocked Rs 600 crore of residential sales during the April-June quarter of the current fiscal year. The collections from customers were also healthy at about Rs 270 crore.

Asked about the FY23 target of sales bookings, Subramanian

said the company does not give annual guidance but it will be significant growth over the previous fiscal.

"We have demonstrated over the past several years that we know how to do strong launches. So, now it is a question of land acquisition, approvals and getting ready for launch. As long as we are able to address that and keep moving that pipeline, I think the numbers will happen," he observed.

On new launches, Subramanian said three new projects/new phases of existing projects have been launched so far this fiscal in Bengaluru, Pune and Gurugram.

The company has plans to launch new projects or new phases in Chennai, Pune and Mumbai this fiscal year.



INTERNATIONAL

Modi attends SCO summit in Uzbekistan



Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the first in-person summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in two years in the historic Uzbek city here which

will deliberate on major regional security challenges and issues like trade, investment and energy supplies. Modi arrived in Samarkand on Thursday night to attend

the summit of the eight-member SCO grouping which will also see the participation of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Iran's Ebrahim

SCO Summit: Modi and other leaders deliberate on pressing issues

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Friday deliberated on the regional security situation and ways to enhance trade and connectivity at the annual summit of the grouping. It is for the first

time Modi and Xi came face-to-face at the summit in this historic Uzbek city since the start of the border standoff between India and China in eastern Ladakh around 28 months back. However, there is no clarity yet on whether there will be a bilateral meeting between Modi and Xi on the sidelines of the summit.

Raisi, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other leaders from the Central Asian countries.

The SCO summit in Samarkand will have two sessions -- one restricted session

which is only meant for the SCO member states and then there will be an extended session that is likely to see the participation of the observers and the special invitees of the chair country.

Dhama condemns act of stopping Sikhs from ferrying out Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA SHOULD INTERVENE TO PROTECT RIGHTS OF SIKHS IN AFGHANISTAN UNDER TALIBAN RULE: DHAMA

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar



Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhama strongly condemned the decision of the Taliban ruled government in Afghanistan, of placing a restriction on ferrying out Guru Granth Sahib from their country.

He said as per the information, a group of 60 Afghan Sikhs was scheduled to come to India on September 11, 2022, but they could not reach here, as they were not granted permission to bring along holy sarroops (scriptures) of Guru Granth Sahib, the master of Sikhs. SGPC Presi-

dent said that this is direct interference in the religious affairs of Sikhs by the Afghan government. "On one side, attacks are being done on Sikhs and their holy Gurdwara Sahibs, and on the other, they are being stopped from coming to India with holy sarroops of Guru Granth Sahib", said he. Advocate Dhama said that the minority Afghan Sikhs are leaving their home country due to atrocities and insecurity. "It is a matter of concern that if Sikhs do not stay in Afghanistan, who will take care of Guru Granth Sahib, and Gurdwara Sahibs there? It is this reason that the Sikhs while coming to India are bringing along holy Guru Granth Sahib", said he. He said the Taliban ruled government of Afghanistan should not take decisions against the sentiments of Sikhs. SGPC President appealed to the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to intervene in this matter to stop the Afghanistan government from taking decisions against Sikh sentiments and protect the rights of Sikhs in Afghanistan under Taliban rule.

China banned from Queen's Lying-in-State in Parliament complex



The House of Commons Speaker has refused permission for a Chinese government delegation to attend the Queen's Lying-in-State at Westminster Hall within the Parliament complex before the funeral at Westminster Abbey in London on Monday, according to UK media reports. Sir Lindsay Hoyle is said to have refused a request for access to Westminster Hall due to Chinese sanctions against five British members of Parliament and two peers for accusing Beijing of mistreating its Uighur Muslim minority, 'Politico' and BBC have reported. While the House of Commons said it did not comment on security matters, the media reports claimed that China would have a presence at the funeral but not be allowed into the Parliament building.

Joe Biden approval rises sharply ahead of midterms

President Joe Biden's popularity improved substantially from his lowest point this summer, but concerns about his handling of the economy persist, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Support for Biden recovered from a low of 36 per cent in July to 45 per cent, driven in large part by a rebound in support from Democrats just two months before the November midterm elections. During a few bleak summer months when gasoline prices peaked and lawmakers appeared deadlocked, the Democrats faced the possibility of blowout losses against Republicans.

Their outlook appears better after notching a string of legislative successes that left more Americans ready to judge the president on his preferred terms: Don't compare me to the Almighty. Compare me to the alternative.

The president's approval rating remains underwater, with 53 per cent of US adults disapproving of him, and the economy continues to be a weakness for Biden.

Just 38 per cent approve of his economic leadership as the country faces stubbornly high inflation and Republicans try to make household finances the axis of the upcoming vote.

Still, the poll suggests Biden and his fellow Democrats are gaining momentum right as generating voter enthusiasm and turnout takes precedence.

Average gas prices have tumbled 26 per cent since June to USD 3.71 a gallon, reducing the pressure somewhat on family budgets even if inflation remains high. Congress also passed a pair of landmark bills in the past month that could reshape the economy and reduce carbon emissions.

Republicans have also faced resistance since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade and its abortion protections. And Biden is openly casting



former President Donald Trump as a fundamental threat to democracy, a charge that took on resonance after an FBI search of Trump's Florida home found classified documents that belong to the US government.

This combination of factors has won Biden some plaudits among the Democratic faithful, even if Americans still feel lukewarm about his leadership.

I'm not under any belief that he's the best person for the job he's the best from the people we had to choose from, said Betty Bogacz, 74, a retiree from Portland, Oregon. He represented stability, which I feel President Trump did not represent at all.

Biden's approval rating didn't exceed 40 per cent in May, June or July as inflation surged in the aftermath of Russia invading Ukraine.

The president's rating now is similar to what it was throughout the first quarter of the year, but he continues to fall short of early highs. His average approval rating in AP-NORC polling through the first six months of his term was 60 per cent.

Driving the recent increase in Biden's popularity is renewed support among Democrats, who had shown signs of defection in the early summer. Now, 78 per cent of Democrats approve of Biden's job performance, up from 65 per cent in July. Sixty-six per cent of Democrats approve of Biden on the economy, up from 54 per cent in June.

Amid inflation, Turkey launches massive housing project for low-income families

Low-income families in Turkey started submitting applications for a massive social housing project that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan described as the largest such initiative in the history of the country currently in the grip of rising inflation.

The five-year project was announced by Erdogan on Tuesday, as the government battles rising housing and rental costs as well as a 24-year-high inflation rate of more than 80 per cent in August, reports Xinhua news agency.

Under the project, 500,000 homes and 250,000 residential plots will be provided to eligible applicants whose monthly income is less than 18,000 liras (\$990) in Istanbul and 16,000 liras in other provinces. According to local media, the project will cost the government close to \$50 billion. Priority would be given to pensioners, young people, newlyweds, army veterans, relatives of soldiers killed



in combat and the disabled, according to Erdogan.

More than 250,000 people have submitted their applications on the first day of its launch on Wednesday, according to Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Minister Murat Kurum.

In Istanbul, the country's largest city of 16 million people, long queues of applicants were seen outside public banks. The project was launched at a time when housing and rental costs throughout the country, particu-

Sun Group awarded Asia's Leading Integrated Tourism Group 2022

FW DESK

With the journey of creation of many prestigious and iconic landmarks, which have been hailed as architectural masterpieces, Sun Group, one of Vietnam's leading real estate and tourism developers, was honored at the World Travel Awards Asia and Oceania 2022, in Ho Chi Minh City on September 7.

In recognition of the best providers in tourism and high standard products, World Travel Awards (WTA), the travel industry's most prestigious awards programme, has named Sun Group as "Asia's Leading Integrated Tourism Group 2022".

In addition, Sun Hospitality Group, a resort brand under Sun Group, was also awarded "Asia's Leading Hospitality Development Company". Four hotels & resorts created and owned by Sun Group, including Capella Hanoi, JW Mar-



riott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay, New World Phu Quoc and Premier Village Halong were also honored with prestige awards by WTA.

It's an honor for Sun Group and also Vietnam's tourism industry as this is the first time a Vietnamese enterprise has won this award by WTA, which was likened to the "Oscar of the world travel industry".

Established in 1993, the WTA was created by Graham Cooke to reward and celebrate excellence across various sectors within the travel industry. It is an internationally-recognized award.

Japan logs record Aug trade deficit on weak yen, costly oil



Japan posted a record trade deficit in August as costs for imports of oil and gas soared, the government reported on Thursday. The 2.82 trillion yen (USD 19.6 billion) deficit, the 13th in a row, was triple the deficit logged in the same month a year earlier. Customs data showed exports rose 22 per cent from a year earlier as regional economies recovered from pandemic-related disruptions while imports soared 50 per cent. Energy-related imports from the Middle East accounted for about half of the deficit. Japan's currency, the yen, has weakened sharply against the US dollar as the Federal Reserve has raised interest rates to counter inflation. Surging prices for many commodities and other products are also pushing Japan's imports higher.

India, Gulf Cooperation Council sign MoU to facilitate consultations

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has held a "productive" meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Nayef Falah Mubarak Al-Hajraf during which the two leaders signed an MoU on the mechanism of consultations between India and the six-nation regional bloc.

Jaishankar arrived here on Saturday on a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia to discuss ways to further strengthen relations between the two countries. It is his first visit to Saudi Arabia as External Affairs Minister.

On the first day of his visit on Saturday, Jaishankar met GCC Secretary-General and exchanged views on current regional and global issues.

"Productive meeting with @GCC Secretary-General Dr Nayef Falah Mubarak Al-Hajraf. Signed the MoU on the mechanism of consultations between India and GCC. Exchanged views on the current regional and global situation and the relevance of India-GCC cooperation in that context,"



Jaishankar tweeted after the meeting. The GCC is a regional, intergovernmental, political, and economic union comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

India enjoys traditionally cordial relations and cooperation with the GCC.

India's old, historical ties with the GCC states, coupled with increasing imports of oil and gas, growing trade and investment, and the presence of approximately 6.5 million Indian workers in the region, are of vital interest to India, according to the Indian Embassy

Nepal, India discuss issues of bilateral, mutual interests

Nepal and India discussed matters pertaining to bilateral and mutual interests during the Foreign Secretary-level talks in New Delhi.

At the invitation of his Indian counterpart Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Nepal's Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Poudyal arrived in New Delhi and held the bilateral talks at Hyderabad House on Tuesday where two sides discussed a wide range of issues and issues related to mutual interest and concerns, according to statements issued by New Delhi and Kathmandu.

The Foreign Secretaries discussed multiple areas of cooperation between Nepal and India covering trade, transit, connectivity, infrastructure, power sector, irrigation and inundation, agriculture, investment, development cooperation, health sector cooperation, culture, and people to people rela-



tions, among others, a statement issued by the Nepali Embassy in New Delhi said.

"They reviewed the progress on the discussions held during the high-level visits of the Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba to India on April 1-3 and of Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to Lumbini, Nepal on May 16. The two Foreign Secretaries discussed the ways and means to build on momentum generated by those visits. They also discussed cooperation on multilateral forums," the statement added.

Driven by consumers, US inflation grows more persistent

US inflation is showing signs of entering a more stubborn phase that will likely require drastic action by the Federal Reserve, a shift that has panicked financial markets and heightens the risks of a recession.

Some of the longtime drivers of higher inflation spiking gas prices, supply chain snarls, soaring used-car prices are fading. Yet underlying measures of inflation are actually worsening.

The ongoing evolution of the forces behind an inflation rate that's near a four-decade high has made it harder for the Fed to wrestle it under control. Prices are no longer rising because a few categories have skyrocketed in cost. Instead, inflation has now spread more widely through the economy, fuelled by a strong job market that is boosting paychecks, forcing companies to raise prices to cover higher labour costs and



giving more consumers the wherewithal to spend.

On Tuesday, the government said inflation ticked up 0.1 per cent from July to August and 8.3 per cent from a year ago, which was down from June's four-decade high of 9.1 per cent.

But excluding the volatile categories of food and energy,

so-called core prices jumped by an unexpectedly sharp 0.6 per cent from July to August, after a milder 0.3 per cent rise the previous month. The Fed monitors core prices closely, and the latest figures heightened fears of an even more aggressive Fed and sent stocks plunging, with the Dow Jones collapsing more than 1,200 points.

Members of diaspora have always been admirable Indian ambassadors: Modi

Congratulating the Indian American community for celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava at the US Capitol, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that members of the diaspora are admirable Indian ambassadors of the country. In a message to the Indian American community as they gathered here to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava, Modi on Wednesday said that the community have spread the fragrance of Indian values by living them. Members of our diaspora have always been admirable ambassadors for our nation. They have spread the fragrance of Indian values by living them - respecting all cultures, mingling seamlessly and enriching societies with their unique contributions, Modi said.

Jill Biden shares memories of 9/11 as wife, sister, more

When Jill Biden realised that terrorists had attacked America on September 11, 2001, her husband, Joe, wasn't the only loved one whose safety she worried about.

Biden recalled being scared to death that her sister Bonny Jacobs, a United Airlines flight attendant, was on one of the four hijacked airplanes that were flown into New York's World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field, killing nearly 3,000 people.

After learning that her sister was safe at her Pennsylvania home, I went straight to Bonny's house, Biden told The Associated Press on Saturday as she and her sister remembered that day.

On Sunday, Jill Biden, now the first lady, will mark the 21st anniversary of the 9/11 attacks by delivering remarks at the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania accompanied by Jacobs.

The 40 passengers and crew aboard that United Airlines flight fought back against their hijackers, thwarting a feared



attack on the US Capitol in Washington.

I called Bonny to see where she was because I was scared to death ... I didn't know where she was, whether she was flying, not flying, where she was, Jill Biden recalled. And then I found out she was home.

Biden had gone to teach her class at Delaware Technical Community College, then went straight to her sister's house after school was dismissed.

Joe Biden, then a US senator, was on an Amtrak train barreling toward Washington when his wife got through to him.

They were on the phone when she cried out, Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God after an airplane hit the second World Trade Center tower.

WikiLeaks founder's family brings campaign to Mexico

This week the objective was to insert mention of Julian Assange into a meeting between Mexico's president and the United States' top diplomat. Next week, it will be to have Australia's prime minister bring it up with the US president at Queen Elizabeth II's funeral.

The efforts are part of the campaign by John Shipton, father of the WikiLeaks founder, to find allies and convince the US to drop espionage charges against Assange, who remains in a British prison awaiting extradition to the US. The journey by the septuagenarian Australian architect together with another son, Gabriel, brought them this week to Mexico. The country has become the family's main ally in Latin America since President Andrés Manuel López Obrador offered Assange political asylum and called for the US to allow him to seek refuge there.

We call President López Obrador an ice-breaker, because afterward the leaders of Chile, Colombia and Bolivia called for his release too, Gabriel Shipton said during the visit to Mexico. Among a packed schedule of events, John Shipton received the key to the capital Wednesday on behalf of Assange, a ceremonial honour the city bestows on distinguished guests. The day before, he addressed Mexico's Senate. American prosecutors say Assange helped US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning steal classified diplomatic cables and military files that WikiLeaks later published, putting lives at risk. He faces 17 charges of espionage and one charge of computer misuse. His defenders consider Assange a symbol of a free press and a fight for justice who exposed US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Sneak a Peek with the Trailer of the Theatrical Smash Hit 'Sohreyan Da Pind Aa Gaya'



the Punjabi villages, starring Gurnam Bhullar, Sargun Mehta, Jass Bajwa, and Jasmine Bajwa in the key parts, is about to make its OTT premiere on ZEE5.

The movie's trailer makes it clear that director Kshitij Chaudhary has elevated this tale of revenge and love to a new level of comedy punches, where Sargun Mehta and Gurnam Bhullar, two of Bollywood's most renowned and devoted actors, are ready to provide you with an incredibly fun time with their extraordinary chemistry and partners-in-crime relationship magic.

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

produced by Shree Narotam Ji Film Productions, New Era Films, and Bollywood Heights in association with Zee Studios, has just been released a trailer. The intriguing tale of love-revenge that is unfolding in

In addition to being a love story, the Punjabi movie 'Sohreyan Da Pind Aa Gaya,' written by Ambardeep Singh and

Urmila Matondkar, Shreyas Talpade to star in Marathi film 'Ti Me Navhech'

Urmila Matondkar and Shreyas Talpade are teaming up for the first time for the upcoming Marathi film "Ti Me Navhech", the makers announced Thursday.



ing noted actors at an event here.

The films will be made under Painter's banner Kaleidoscope Cinema & Picture Productions, alongside producer Rajesh Kumar Mohanty's S R Enterprises. Manoj Avana will co-produce the slate with line producers Mangesh Jagtap and Sejal Painter.

Writer-producer Paritosh Painter, best known for penning the Hindi comedy film series "Dhamaal",

announced seven Marathi films to be directed by eminent directors and featur-

Madhuri Dixit Nene to star as lead in 'MAJA MA'



Madhuri Dixit Nene will be seen as the lead star in the upcoming movie 'Maja Ma', a family entertainer slated to release digitally on October 6.

Directed by Anand Tiwari, 'Maja Ma' is Prime Video's first Indian Amazon Original movie, set against the celebratory backdrop of a traditional festival and a quintessential, colourful Indian wedding.

It boasts of an ensemble cast including Gajraj Rao, Ritwik Bhowmik, Barkha Singh, Sr-

ishti Shrivastava, Rajit Kapur, Sheeba Chaddha, Simone Singh, Malhar Thakar and Ninad Kamat.

Director Anand Tiwari said that this is his second project with Prime Video after the success of 'Bandish Bandits'.

"The movie is a labour of love for all of us, from the wonderfully talented cast to the hardworking crew, each of whom have put in their best to bring this amazing movie to the audience."

Bigger event films will be box office leaders in India: Ayan Mukerji

At a time when luring the audiences to theatres was becoming increasingly difficult for Bollywood, director Ayan Mukerji's most ambitious film Brahmastra Part One: Shiva has achieved the feat renewing his faith that "big event" movies are the future of Indian cinema.

The fantasy action adventure epic starring real-life couple Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt has crossed Rs 225 crore in worldwide gross box office collections since its release on September 9.

One of the most expensive Indian films said to be mounted on a budget north of Rs 400 crore, Brahmastra Part One: Shiva serves as the first installment of a planned trilogy of the Indian cinematic universe titled 'Astraverse'. According to Mukerji, the audience today looks forward to having a cinematic experience in theatres, which he believes only juggernaut multi-starrers can offer.

"Around the time when I decided to embark on making

a film like Brahmastra' years ago, there was a trend to come in and watch stuff on the bigger screen. With the advent of technology, audiences want that big screen experience.

"The reason you come out to watch a film on the big screen is that it should offer you something that is big screen worthy. And what is big screen worthy is giving big screen visuals, the 39-year-old director told PTI in an interview here.

This has been the tendency globally for the last 15 years, added Mukerji, an admirer of Hollywood tentpole blockbusters like "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy and several superhero films from Marvel Studios.

This year, the Indian exhibition sector itself has witnessed the phenomenal box office success of lavishly mounted south Indian films such as KGF: Chapter 2 starring Yash, SS Rajamouli's RRR, and Kamal Haasan's Vikram.

Justin Bieber cancels India show due to health reasons



Pop star Justin Bieber has cancelled the India leg of his 'Justice World Tour' owing to health concerns, promoters BookMyShow said Thursday.

The development comes three months after Bieber announced that he was diagnosed with the Ramsay-Hunt Syndrome, which had caused him partial facial paralysis. The 28-year-old Grammy winner, who was set to perform in New Delhi on October 18 as part of 'Justin Bieber Justice World Tour', had said on June 15 that he was putting a pause on his world tour due to illness.

Rajinikanth's daughter Soundarya welcomes second baby



Superstar Rajinikanth's younger daughter Soundarya Rajinikanth has welcomed her second child.

Soundarya shared the news of the birth of her baby boy on Instagram on Sunday night. She revealed the newborn has been named Veer.

"With gods abundant grace and our parents blessings Vishagan, Ved and I are thrilled to welcome Ved's little brother Veer Rajinikanth Vanangamudi today 11/9/22 #Veer #Blessed, she wrote along side pictures capturing her whole pregnancy.

The newborn baby is Soundarya's first child with businessman Vishagan. The couple got married in 2019.

She has a first named Ved from her first marriage to businessman Ashwin Ramkumar.

The filmmaker, best known for her directorial debut Kochadaiyaan (2014), starring her father Rajinikanth, also thanked the team of doctors. Congratulatory messages poured in from fans and industry colleagues, actor Abhishek Bachchan.

POTPOURRI

Brahmastra Part One: Shiva' raises Rs 300 cr in worldwide box office gross in week 1



"Brahmastra Part One: Shiva" has earned Rs 300 crore in gross box office collection worldwide in the first week of its release, the makers announced on Friday.

Directed by Ayan Mukerji, the big-budget fantasy adventure epic was released on September 9. Starring

Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Amitabh Bachchan, "Brahmastra" had collected Rs 75 crore globally in gross figures on its opening day.

In a media statement, Star Studios and Dharma Productions shared an update on the box office numbers of the film.

Singer Shailendra, musicians Anand-Milind to get Lata Mangeshkar Award on her birth anniversary

Noted playback singer Shailendra Singh and music composer duo Anand-Milind will be conferred with the National Lata Mangeshkar Award on September 28, the birth anniversary of the late singer, at her birthplace Indore in Madhya Pradesh, an administration official said on Wednesday.

The award is given annually by the Madhya Pradesh culture department to promote excellence in the field of music. It carries a cash prize of Rs two lakh and a citation.

Shailendra Singh, who is known for his distinct voice and sang many of the popular numbers in 1970s and 80s, will be given the Lata Mangeshkar Award for the year 2019.

Anand-Milind, who have composed music for more than 200 films, will be conferred with the prestigious award for the year 2020, the official said.

The Madhya Pradesh government last time organised the Lata Mangeshkar Award function on February 7, 2020. It could not be held after that due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar was born in Indore on September 28, 1929. She passed away in Mumbai on February 6, 2022. Earlier, noted artists including Naushad, Kishore Kumar and Asha Bhosle were conferred with this award.



Zee Punjabi with "SANJHA SUFNA" cast on Pollywood Gupshup

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Zee Punjabi's upcoming new show Sanjha Sufna star cast is all set to entertain the audience on Pollywood Gupshup this Sunday and will share their humorous and exciting experiences on the show.

The weekend of Punjabis has already been filled with endless entertainment and fun all thanks to Pollywood

Gupshup, which showcases new guests in each episode. Carrying on the tradition, it will welcome the lead actors, Priya Thakur and Manish Khanna of Zee Punjabi's upcoming new show Sanjha Sufna which premieres on 26th Sept at 7 pm, which, as its name suggests, will tell the tale of a girl's tenacity and commitment to pursue her goals in addition to her familial responsibilities.



Farmers raise slogans during a protest against the Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2022, outside Punjab Minister Inderbir Singh Nijjar's residence in Amritsar on Monday. PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILL

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