

REGION **2**

AAP INTRODUCED FREE REVDI IN INDIAN POLITICS WHICH HAS BECOME HEADACHE FOR BJP: KEJRIWAL



NEW DELHI: Addressing Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) first Rashtriya Janpratinidhi Sammelan here on Sunday, Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal accused the Prime Minister's media advisor of threatening the media.

«There's one gentleman named Hiren Joshi who works in the Prime Minister's Office. He is the media advisor to the Prime Minister. Editors and owners of big news channels have shown me the vulgar abuses and threatening notes he sends them, « the AAP chief claimed. Kejriwal alleged that Joshi sends messages saying «if you show Kejriwal on your channel, we will do this or that», there is no need to cover AAP, «there are misusing your channel» etc. «Is this how you'll run the country,



by threatening people, « the Delhi CM asked.

«Today, I want to tell Hiren Joshi that if someone leaks the screenshots of the messages you have sent to these editors on social media, you and the Prime Minister won't be able to show your faces in this country, « Kejriwal said.

For the first time, all the elected representatives of AAP from across

the nation met at the Rashtriya Janpratinidhi Sammelan on Sunday. The meeting was called to discuss ways to strengthen the party organisation. Talking about allegations levelled against AAP MLAs, Kejriwal said, «Had Satyendar Jain been in any other country, he would have been given him the Bharat Ratna.»

«Prime Minister Manish Sisodia's house alleging liquor scam of Rs 144 crore. But nothing came out. On Saturday, they caught Amanatullah Khan. They will put everyone in jail. So everyone should prepare to go to jail for 3-4 months, but they cannot harm you. Jail is not that bad, even I have spent 15 days there. If everyone has the courage, then they can't do anything, « Kehriwal said in his address to party representatives.

BANKING & FINANCE **6**



RUPEE SLIPS BELOW 81-MARK AGAINST US DOLLAR FOR FIRST TIME IN EARLY TRADE

Lotus, he said, «BJP don't need to topple any Government especially where just after the three months of formation of Government, AAP lost its Parliament seat in Punjab that depicts the plight of AAP in the state as people here no more like AAP Government. This Government was already fallen in the eyes of people and no need for any political party to topple them».

He said that if BJP can form and repeat its government in Haryana two times in a row, Uttar Pradesh two times, three times Goa, even formed Government in Uttarkhand and Manipur and some other states, so why not BJP could form Government in Punjab with absolute majority in the coming time, equipped.

BJP CAN FORM GOVERNMENT IN PUNJAB WITH FULL MAJORITY

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting and Sports & Youth Affairs Anurag Thakur alleged that AAP led Governments in Delhi as well as in Punjab were indulging in corrupt practice.

Addressing the press conference here today, he said, « A news about a big leader surfaced who was allegedly found in state of drunken when he boarded the plane and subsequently he was deplaned is a matter of deep concern if it is true and correct. He said that truth would come in the near future as to why Chief Minister along with his official staff of Punjab was forced to offload the plane in foreign country».



He said issues like drug, crime planned from the jails of Punjab and mushrooming of gangsters on the soil of Punjab was a matter of deep concern and here Punjab police needed hard work to eradicate such menace, since the state has already experienced bad days of militancy. He said for all such reasons investors were scared to invest in Punjab.

Anurag Thakur was here to take part in 52nd Annual Sports Prize Distribution Function held in the University of Guru Nanak Dev University. He honoured the players (included 25 International players, position holders of Khelo India University Games, All India Inter-University Championships and Khelo India Youth Games) of Guru Nanak Dev University with cash prizes worth more than 2 crore and trophies to overall best performing colleges who brought laurels to the University in various sports disciplines at the International, Khelo India .

POTPOURRI **8**



AAMIR KHAN'S DAUGHTER IRA, NUPUR SHIKHARE ARE ENGAGED

According to the NGT, the total compensation is rounded off at Rs 2,180 crore. Out of this, the Punjab government has already deposited with the tribunal Rs 100 crore for its failure to prevent discharge of untreated sewage and solid waste.

«The remaining amount of Rs 2,080 crore may be deposited by the state of Punjab in a separate ring-fenced account within two months,» the bench said.

The NGT is monitoring compliance of Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and other environmental issues by states and Union territories.

The Kerala High Court on Friday took a case on its own over the hartal declared by radical Islamic outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) and subsequent sporadic incidents of violence in the state.

The court said hartal was banned by it earlier and the destruction of the public property cannot be accepted. The court also asked the state administration to take stern action against those who violate the court order banning hartals.

It asked the government to use all possible means to stop any form



National Green Tribunal slaps over Rs 2,000 cr fine on Punjab for failure to treat waste

NEW DELHI: National Green Tribunal has imposed a penalty of over Rs 2,000 crore on the Punjab government for its failure to treat solid and liquid waste, leading to a huge gap in their generation and treatment.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice AK Goel said corrective action could not wait for an indefinite period and health issues could not be deferred for long.

«Responsibility of the state is to have a comprehensive plan to control pollution which is its absolute liability, which is not being understood.

«If there is deficit in budgetary allocations, it is for the state and the state alone to have suitable planning by reducing cost or augmenting resources,» the bench said. It said the compliance of environmental norms on the subject of waste management had to be high on priority.

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Kerala HC takes suo motu case against PFI hartal

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It asked the government to use all possible means to stop any form

of violence. Sporadic incidents of violence, including stone pelting, were reported since Friday morning in various parts of Kerala as the dawn-to-dusk hartal called by PFI was underway.

The hartal was called by the PFI to protest against the raids in the offices and residences of its leaders and their subsequent arrests on Thursday by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and other agencies for allegedly supporting terror activities in the country.

Nitish Kumar & Lalu Prasad to meet Sonia Gandhi on Sep 25



PATNA: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and RJD National President Lalu Prasad Yadav will meet Congress chief Sonia Gandhi in Delhi on September 25.

Both the leaders of Bihar will go to New Delhi for the meeting.

Nitish Kumar is currently flexing his muscles to unite opposition parties in the country. He went to Delhi for the three days and met several leaders including Rahul Gandhi, Sitaram Yechury, D. Raja, Arvind Kejriwal, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Akhilesh Yadav and others. As Sonia Gandhi was not present at that time, he did not meet her.

Ashok Gehlot writes to Punjab CM seeking timely completion of Budha Nullah Rejuvenation Project

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday has written a letter to his Punjab counterpart, Bhagwant Mann, drawing the latter's attention to the issue of «untreated water» coming from Punjab into the canals of Rajasthan.

In the letter, Gehlot urged Mann to direct his officials to complete the construction of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) under Punjab's Buddha Nullah Rejuvenation Project on time and to stop the flow of untreated waste



directly into the rivers/nullahs.

«Rajasthan receives its share of water from Ravi-Beas and Sutlej rivers from Harike barrage. The polluted water of Ludhiana city of Punjab through Budha Nullah and the urban and industrial waste of cities/towns situated near Sutlej river through drains reaches Harike barrage,» he said in the letter.

Punjab DGP constitutes SIT over 'leaked objectionable videos' of students

Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav on Monday constituted a three-member all-women Special Investigating Team (SIT), under the supervision of Additional DGP Gurpreet Deo, to investigate allegations by Chandigarh University hostellers over their alleged 'leaked objectionable videos'.



Huge protests broke out on the university campus in Mohali district after a girl allegedly leaked private videos of her hostel mates online.

A day after daylong protest, silence returned to the campus on Monday as the local administration and the university agreed to investigate the demand of the students over objectionable videos of several girl students that were recorded by a hosteller and shared with her friend in Shimla. The police arrested an MBA first-year student of the university, while her friend and another person were held in Shimla.

As the matter drew angry political reactions, the university authorities clarified that «no videos were found of any student which are objectionable, except a personal video shot by a girl which she shared with her boyfriend».

Stones pelted at Emraan Hashmi during shoot in Kashmir



FW DESK

Stones were pelted Bollywood actor Emraan Hashmi during the shoot of his new film Ground Zero in Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir Police have identified the miscreant and arrested him.

«One miscreant pelted stones at the crew members. He has been identified and arrested,» Anantnag police said in a statement.

Hashmi is currently shooting in Pahalgam for the Tejas Deuskar directorial Ground Zero. The movie also stars Sai Tamhankar. The movie marks the first on-screen pairing between the duo. Sai is playing Hashmi's wife in the film. The film is backed by Farhan Akhtar's Excel Entertainment.

According to reports, the incident happened during the evening when the actor went out after wrapping the day's shoot.

An FIR was registered at Police Station Pahalgam, under Sections 77/22 U/S 147, 148, 370, 336, 323.

However, Hashmi denied the reports that he was injured in the stone pelting.

Capt Amarinder Singh joins BJP along with former MPs, MLAs

NEW DELHI: Two time Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and a veteran of many political and military battles, today joined the Bharatiya Janata Party in presence of Union Ministers Narendra Tomar and Kiren Rijji and a galaxy of other senior leaders.

Among those present included senior leaders Ashwani Sharma, Sunil Jakhar and others.

Besides Capt Amarinder Singh, others who joined the BJP today included former Deputy Speaker Ajai Singh Bhatti, former MPs Amrik Singh Aliwal, Kewal Singh, former MLAs Prem Mittal, Ms Harchand Kaur, Harjinder Thekedar, Balbir Rani Sodhi, former Punjab Mahila Congress president, Raninder Singh, Beeba Jaya Inder Kaur, Nirvan Singh, Kamaljit Saino and Farzana Alam, who was represented by her daughter



as she was abroad at the BJP headquarters here today.

Earlier, Capt Amarinder met union Home Minister Amit Shah and the BJP president, JP Nadda before joining the party.

Welcoming Capt Amarinder and others into the party, Mr Tomar said, Capt Amarinder had always kept national interests above the partisan interests. He said, with his joining the party, BJP will be strengthened further in Punjab.

Capt Amarinder expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home

Minister Amit Shah and the BJP president JP Nadda for reposing trust and confidence in him. He assured that he will give in his best to strengthen the party in Punjab. Capt Amarinder Singh, a veteran of many political and military battles, left the Congress last year after resigning as the Chief Minister. He set up his own political outfit, Punjab Lok Congress, which fought February 2022 assembly elections in alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Capt Amarinder, is one of the most popular and charismatic political leaders in the country, who carries charisma and commands a lot of respect and influence in Punjab cutting across all divides. The Congress realized his importance after the devastating 2022 drubbing and defeat when it was reduced from 82 seats to mere 18.

It goes to Capt Amarinder's credit that the Congress could form government in Punjab twice, in 2002 and 2017 after the Operation Bluestar and the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi. It remained a strong political force under Capt Amarinder even when it lost in 2007 and 2012 when its poll percentage was almost the same as that of the winning Akali-BJP alliance.

Capt Amarinder combines strong panthic credentials with equally strong nationalistic credentials. He resigned from the parliament and also from the Congress in 1984 to protest against the Operation Bluestar.

It was no ordinary decision to defy someone like Ms Indira Gandhi. Capt Amarinder was at that time just 42, risking his political career. He again resigned from the Barmala government when police entered Durbar Sahib two years later.

In 2004, Capt Amarinder put his Chief Ministership at stake when he repealed all previous water sharing agreements in the Punjab assembly to save further flow of water from Punjab to Haryana. He antagonized his party president Sonia Gandhi that time to save Punjab's waters. She did not grant him an audience for about a year as a disapproval of his decision to save Punjab waters.

Capt Amarinder has equally strong nationalistic credentials. His nationalistic stand on various issues apart, not many people know that Capt Amarinder rejoined the army to fight war against Pakistan in 1964.

Prepare next 25-years plan with people's participation: Modi at BJP mayors conclave

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has advised the mayors to prepare the next 25-year plan with people's participation.

He virtually addressed a conclave of BJP mayors on Tuesday and suggested that the development must be of such scale that people remember it for decades and generations.

The conclave was kicked off by the Prime Minister and party's national president J.P. Nadda in Gandhinagar. While addressing the mayors, the Prime Minister said the mayors should focus on planning in such a way that the burden on the city reduces and satellite townships develop in the surrounding areas.



Modi even suggested that the elected representatives should reach out to the street vendors and ensure that each vendor is educated about the PM Swandhi yojana, and train them to do all their transactions digitally. «If they do more digital transactions, they can avail bank loans at low interest rates than borrowing from private financiers,» Modi said. «Mayors should also take keen interest in such street vendors' family life, in teaching their children and make them aware about how much they contribute to the city's economy,» the PM said.

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut's judicial custody extended till Oct 3

FW DESK

A Special Prevention of Money Laundering Act Court extended the judicial custody of Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut by 14 days till October 3 here on Monday.

Raut was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on



August 1 in connection with the alleged Patra Chawl redevelopment scam case, and has been in custody since.

The ED had recorded the Sena MP's statement and later raided his home on July 31, detained and then arrested him early on August 1 in the Patra Chawl, Goregaon case.

SGPC to file review petition in HSGMC case: Dhami

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has decided to file a review petition following the Supreme Court judgment today in the case regarding challenge to validity of Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC) Act, 2014. The opinion of senior lawyers will be taken in this regard and the legal action is required accordingly.

This decision was taken in the SGPC executive committee (EC) meeting presided over by SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhami, here on Tuesday.

Talking to the media after the meeting, SGPC President said that a consensus has been reached to file a review petition in the case of validity to HSGMC Act, 2014, by the Supreme Court, for which, the officials of SGPC have been deputed at Delhi. He said that the next legal action will be taken as per the opinion of the senior



lawyers after examining the Supreme Court's order.

SGPC President said that it is not right to comment on the Supreme Court's judgment, but the move played by the then Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda to form a separate Gurdwara management committee for Haryana is dividing the Sikh power.

«Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda is a part of Congress class that massacred Sikhs, but it is sad that the incumbent BJP Government also followed the same footsteps and became partners in breaking the foremost representative institution of Sikhs. The politics of breaking up SGPC and dividing Sikh power is not right and the governments should not interfere in Sikh issues,» said Dhami.

Carbon, pollution & waste are three big environmental concerns that need to be tackled with the right kind of policies: S C Garg

FW DESK New Delhi

There is an alternative system of energy productions coming up, which are equally efficient and competitive. Digitalisation and environmental production of goods and services will make this alternative technological transition much better, competitive and profitable,» said Shri S C Garg, Former Finance Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Government of India at the India ESG Conclave 2022. He added, «The circular economy concept is based on waste management, where the three big environmental concerns are carbon, pollution and the waste. These need to be tackled with the right kind of strategies and policies.» The event, themed: Challenges, Opportunities & The Way Forward, was or-



ganised by the apex industry body, Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

Garg, who was the guest of honour at the event, also spoke of the need for incentives that encourage the use of alternative energy technologies. «We need to tweak the incentive model a little bit and put a tax on the negative value-adds, which are carbon, pollutants and the waste. We can quantify them. For instance, the use of a tonne of carbon dioxide will cost a specific amount.

AAP introduced free revdi in Indian politics which has become headache for BJP: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI: Aam Aadmi Party introduced the culture of free revdi for the first time in the Indian politics which is neither being eaten nor swallowed by them (BJP), said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal while addressing the party's first ever Rashtriya Janpratinidhi Sammelan held in the capital city here on Sunday.



Without taking any names, he said further that they say that this will increase the debt on the government. "Gujarat and Punjab have a debt of Rs 3.5 lakh crore, but the governments there did not give anything for free. Everything is free in Delhi, yet there is no debt," he asked.

Together they want to crush the Aam Aadmi Party. Total 169 cases were filed against AAP leaders, none was punished, and AAP leaders have been acquitted in 135 cases," the AAP chief said.

states and Union Territories," said Kejriwal.

These include MLAs, MPs, Zilla Panchayat members, he said further, adding that these were seeds which have become a tree now. This seed has become a tree in Delhi and Punjab, now this tree is going to be made in Gujarat too, he stated.

While talking about ongoing face-off between Centre and Delhi govt, he said, "Hiren Joshi is the media advisor of the Prime Minister Office who threatens media. Stop this bullying, everyone has kept screen shots and recordings. If someone may issue that evidence, it will create problems." He said that India will not become a world guru by speaking abroad, it will be made by building schools and imparting education.

Talking about allegations made against AAP MLAs, Kejriwal said "If Satyendar Jain had been in any other country, he would have been given the

Bharat Ratna. The man gave Mohalla clinics, free electricity and free treatment. After nothing came out in three courts against him, now they are saying change the judge." "They raided Manish Sisodia's house alleging liquor scam of Rs 144 crore. But, nothing came out. Yesterday, they caught Amanatullah Khan," he added hitting at the Centre.

They will put everyone in jail, prepare to go to jail for 3-4 months, they cannot harm you. Jail is not that bad, even I have come spending 15 days there. If everyone gets this courage, then they can't do anything, added Delhi Chief Minister in his address to party's representatives.

"If the issues of education, health, women's security, farmers' income, employment and infrastructure are fixed, no one can stop India from becoming the number one country in the world. We have to make an alliance of 130 crore people," he concluded.

M Srinivas appointed Director of AIIMS-Delhi



NEW DELHI: M Srinivas, Dean of ESIC Hospital and Medical College in Hyderabad, has been appointed as the Director of AIIMS-Delhi, according to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training on Friday.

(AIIMS), New Delhi.

The appointment is "for a period of five years w.e.f the date of assumption of charge of the post, or till attaining the age of 65 years, or until further orders, whichever is the earliest." The order was initially dated September 9 but the government later issued a fresh one changing the date to September 23.

It further stated the ACC had given "ex-post facto approval for continuation of Dr Randeep Guleria as Director AIIMS, New Delhi w.e.f. March 25, 2022 for six months, or till joining of the new Director, whichever is earlier." Guleria was appointed as director for a term of five years on March

28, 2017. His tenure was extended twice by three months each. Dr Guleria's second extended tenure as the Director of AIIMS-Delhi was scheduled to end on September 23. Earlier in March, names of three doctors -- Nikhil Tandon, head of the department of endocrinology; Rajesh Malhotra, chief of AIIMS Trauma Centre and the head of the department of orthopaedics; and Pramod Garg, professor in the gastroenterology department in the institute -- shortlisted by a search-cum-selection committee and subsequently approved by the Institute Body, the top decision-making body of the AIIMS, were sent to the ACC for approval.

The ACC headed by the prime minister on June 20 sought a wider panel of names for the post of director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here. Following this, names of MV Padma Srivastava, chief of Neurosciences Centre; Dr Balram Bhargava, former ICMR director general; and Dr Rakesh Aggarwal, director of Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research, Puducherry were discussed.

BSF recovers three packets of contrabands and Pistol pushed from Pakistan through drone



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Border Security Force (BSF) have seized three packets of contrabands (suspected to be heroin) 2.570 kgs and one automatic imported pistol which was smuggled to India from Pakistan through drone.

In an official statement here today, official stated that on the night intervening 18th / 19th Sept' 2022, BSF troops deployed on border and depth areas heard a buzzing sound of suspected flying object coming from Pakistan to India side and after a while returning to Pakistan side. Depth deployed troops also observed suspected light (radium type) and heard the sound of dropping something inside a farming field near village Dhano Kalan in Amritsar district. He further informed that during the course of action, BSF troops fired towards the sound of suspected flying object during its incoming and outgoing.

Captain Amarinder's joining BJP is wrong decision: Deepender Hooda



FW DESK

Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda on Monday termed former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's decision to join the BJP as a wrong decision as after the farmers' protest it will not be appreciated by the people.

Speculation 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.

Amarinder Singh was asked to step down as the Chief Minister of Punjab in September last year by the Congress following a power tussle within the party, and in subsequent Assembly election the party was wiped out.

Ahead of his joining the BJP, Singh met the party president J.P. Nadda.

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

Haryana CM turns down pension request of agriculturalist woman

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday firmly turned down the pension request of an agriculturalist woman, saying only eligible persons would be entitled for a pension.



"You already own nine 'kilas' of land and your annual income is Rs 2.5 lakh, therefore you are not eligible for pension benefits," he told the woman at a Jan Samvad Programme in Sirsa town. The woman informed the Chief Minister about her three daughters and sought financial help from him. Khattar then announced to give Rs 1 lakh to the woman from his voluntary quota. He said to avail pension benefits, a beneficiary should not have land more than five 'kilas'. But in this case, as the woman owns nine 'kilas', she is not eligible for the pension benefits.

UP: Four of family sentenced to death for killing couple



Four members of a family were sentenced to death by a local court here in connection with a 2017 murder case of a young couple.

District Judge Pankaj Agrawal on Thursday sentenced Kishanpal, his wife Jaldhara and their sons -- Vijaypal and Ramveer -- to death, prosecution counsel Anil Kumar Singh said.

On May 14, 2017, Pappu Singh, a resident of Uraina village, had lodged a case against the four for killing his son Govind (24) and Kishanpal's daughter Asha (22) with an axe over their love affair, he said.

It was alleged that before the murder, Govind and Asha were called back to the village from Delhi on the pretext of marriage and Kishanpal hit Govind on his head with an axe from behind, killing him.

The four convicts also attacked Asha and killed her when she tried to save Govind.

Vij advises drug smugglers either leave their profession or Haryana

SATISH HANDA Ambala

While having interaction with media persons here at the residence of Haryana Home & Health Anil Vij, a group of senior Sikh community leaders accompanied by Vice President Haryana Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee as well as SGPC member Harpal Singh Pali and Jathedar Ranbir Singh Fauzi arrived to convey thanks to Haryana state government for co-operation in long pending issue for a separate Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) in Haryana state as in case of Delhi. Vij expressed warm welcome to historical decision taken by Supreme Court of India to form a separate committee in Haryana after eight years. Visiting leaders also honored Vij with Siropa.



Vij appreciating the decision said, as told to him Sikh society in the state was awaiting the decision since a long time not only face lifting of all gurudwaras in the state due to shortage of funds since all collections of the funds in Haryana gurudwaras were sent to their head office and they were not permitted for any development works in the state without seeking permission from head office. Pali told that every case will now be taken for face lifting of all gurudwaras in Haryana state besides opening of educational institutes, hospitals and other social welfare organizations because of availability of funds collected in gurudwaras in the state.

As regard incident of demolishing of an illegal residential building over government land in Ambala Cantt on Tuesday by a team of Sadar municipal committee and police which was illegally constructed by a drug smugglers having large number of cases registered against him, Vij

told media persons that it is his sincere advice to all drug smugglers and suppliers either to leave this illegal business immediately or be prepared to leave Haryana state, failing which their properties too will face similar action since there is a long list of anti-social elements with police administration involved in drug smuggling and supply business invested in properties with the earnings through such illegal business, likely to face similar action and no one will be spared, Vij warned.

In reply to a question as regard former Punjab chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh joined BJP recently, Vij said that it will strengthen BJP network in Punjab. As regard Congress protest rally launched by Rahul Gandhi and holding elections for party's national president, Vij said people now understand that Congress is under the influence of a single Gandhi family and its senior leaders are unaware of happenings at present as well as future in the party, moreover the readers have now lost interest in news related to Congress party.

Man burnt alive as truck catches fire on Pathankot-Jammu highway



JAMMU: In a shocking incident, a truck conductor was charred to death after the vehicle caught fire on the Pathankot-Jammu highway in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, the police said on Monday. The incident happened late Sunday evening. Police said the helper of the truck coming to Jammu caught fire in Kathua district on the Pathankot-Jammu national highway. «Fire tenders came to douse the flames, but the helper of the truck could not be saved. «The identity of the helper is being ascertained, «police said.

Tehsildar, his reader arrested at Karnal in bribe case

SATISH HANDA Karnal

Team of the State Vigilance Bureau (SVB), Karnal, on Sunday arrested Gharunda tehsildar identified as Nikhil Singla and his reader Gulshan allegedly demanding bribe for correcting the girdawari of a land. as desired by alleged accuse. After the reader's disclosure that he was taking money on behalf of the tehsildar, the vigilance team arrested tehsildar also from frim his residence at Karnal late in the evening. A case under Sections, 7, 7A of the Prevention of Corruption Act was registered in this regard and both will be produced in the court on Monday vigilance team said.

complaint of Vinod Kumar, a resident of Karnal. The police said they got a complaint regarding demand of bribe by the reader. Based on the complaint, they arrested the reader from Karnal in the evening while accepting Rs 20,000 from the complainant at the Noormahal Chowk Gharunda tehsildar was also having the additional charge of Karnal and Indri tehsils, Gulshan, the reader resident of Sector 7 in Karnal was nabbed by vigilance team in the presence of duty magistrate Anubhav Mehta SDM while accepting bribe for Rs 20000 at Nootmahal Chowk Karnal from Gulshan the reader of the tehsildar.



Both were arrested on the

Network of 11 gangsters spreading terror from abroad

SATISH HANDA

According to Special Task Force (STF) Haryana, as many as 11 criminals most wanted by police in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi states later became gangsters, left country and presently operating gangs in abroad spreading terrorism in India. STF Haryana recently released a list of 11 hard core criminals involved in anti-social activities as well as terrorism most wanted by the police managed to flee to other countries on the basis of fake passports and joined hands with gangster groups to spread terrorism in India. According to Satish Balan Chief and Sumeet Kumar SP Special Task Force in the state, police is trying its best to expand its network in other countries enabling to trap such hard core criminals in their net.



The name of Harvinder Singh alias Rinda ranking at fifth place in the list of gangsters was most wanted criminal by Punjab police

radar working for his arrest as well as another most wanted criminal Vikas Gulia presently operating his network from Dubai. Gulia was wanted by Gurugram police in a high profile criminal case registered against him and left country for Dubai.

Goldi Brar is another name in the list known gangsters frequently appearing on headlines in newspapers allegedly murder, attempts to murder, kidnapping and ransom demand cases registered against him in Haryana and Punjab. Among other names in the list of gangsters include Arshdeep Singh wanted by Haryana police in a case registered against him at Sonapat. According to information by STF Haryana he is operating his gangster network against India presently from Canada. Gurdant Singh alias Janta is another gangster operating his network in Europe spreading terrorism in our country by audio messaging through internet media.

Among another 10 gangsters operating its network in India while sitting abroad include the names of Joginder Singh brother of Surinder Geong shot dead during encounter with Karnal and Kaithal police at a village in Karnal district in 2018. Joginder Singh operating his gangster network against India from South Africa presently on STF

Six-lane access-controlled Greenfield Highway under Amritsar-Jamnagar Economic Corridor in full progress



FW DESK

The project of six-lane access-controlled Greenfield Highway from Rajasthan and Gujarat border to Santalpur section of NH-754A under Amritsar-Jamnagar Economic Corridor is in full progress.

According to the Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, this stretch is the part of Amritsar-Jamnagar Economic Corridor in Gujarat under Bharatmala Pariyojana and Phase-1 and is being built at a project cost of Rs 2, 030 Cr. Once the project is completed, the travel time within this section will reduce by 2 hours and travel distance by 60 km.

"Reducing pollution level, median and avenue plantation throughout the stretch would enrich the ecosystem and boost SDGs (sustainable development goals). The stretch would facilitate easy movement of Border forces/Armed forces/Military vehicles etc as it is closer to Indo-Pak border," said Gadkari on Twitter. The Minister added that the Government is actively committed towards transforming India through excellent connectivity and world class infrastructure. The flagship 1, 224 kilometres long Amritsar - Bhatinda - Jamnagar Corridor is being developed by the NHAI at a total capital cost of Rs 26, 000 crore and is expected to be completed by September 2023. The corridor will connect the economic towns of Bhatinda, Amritsar, Sangaria, Bikaner, Sanchore, Jamnagar and Samakhiali across the four states of Punjab, Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan.

Drugs of value worth Rs 1.25 cr seized at Ambala

SATISH HANDA Ambala

When Jashandeep Singh Randhawa IPS took charge as SP Sonapat, illegal liquor business including manufacturing, smuggling and sale was flourishing in the district but the same was completely wiped out from the district after sometime, perhaps this was the reason state government Haryana transferred Randhawa at Ambala known as hub for smuggling and supply of liquor in the state. However, large number of people involved in illegal manufacture and sale of liquor said good bye to such illegal practices. Not only this, a special campaign against smuggling and sale of drugs was launched by SP Ambala sometime ago.



Ambala district CIA Staff along with Shahzadpur police led by Inspector Varinder Kumar arrested a suspected youth identified as Sukhdev Singh alias Sikha a resident of village Sardehri in Ambala district and recovered from him 263 gm heroine of value worth Rs 1.25 crore and a case was registered against him under sections 21/61/55 of NDPS Act.

during this year in which police recovered drugs of value worth Rs 16 crore. He said, Ambala police recovered over 9 kg 99 gm opium, 3.12 quintal poppy husk, 7 kg 91 gm ganja, 238 gm charas, 64669 intoxicated tablets, 9824 intoxicated capsules, 1750 intoxicated injection and 95 bottles intoxicated syrup. Randhawa told that property of five accused of value worth Rs 4 crore was also seized by the government.

Talking to media persons SP Ambala told that during special campaign police arrested 124 accused in past eight months involved in serious crimes, of them police had announced prize for giving information of 12 most wanted criminals. Randhawa told that Ambala police arrested 242 proclaimed offenders, 124 bangle jumpers and six persons absconding during parole in past eight months this year.

4 arrested supplying banned stamina injections to wrestlers in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

The athletes in Haryana state, especially in the field of wrestling both male and females are popular not only in the country but all over in world bagging medals in national and international games bringing name and fame for the state as well as country. Sadly, wrestlers in Haryana state are being addicted to very harmful injections and tablets used for building stamina in the body being supplied by a chain of suppliers at Delhi as well as in Haryana state. Haryana State Narcotic Bureau recently has been successful in busting a chain of suppliers with the arrest of four persons and recovered 1995 Pentazocine injection so far hoping to seize huge stocks of these harmful drugs soon. According to in-



formation, youths belonging to rural areas in Haryana state are adopting wrestling as their profession because Haryana state government is providing large employment opportunities to athletes in government jobs in the state as such there are large number of wrestling 'Ahata' mushrooming in rural areas in Haryana state at present preparing wrestlers.

On getting complaints as regard use of Pentazocine, Anabolic Steroid, Androstene and Human Growth Hormones (HGH) injections and tablets by youth wrestlers to build stamina, energy and strengthen muscles in their body by youths practicing for wrestling in 'Ahata' in rural areas they are becoming addicted

to these harmful drugs Talking to Media persons Varinder Saini DSP told that on a due Narcotic Bureau team conducted raid at a 'Akhada' at village Kaith in Panipat district and recovered 145 Pentazocine injections from Kaushal a national level wrestler used to take as well as supply these injections to practicing youths in the 'Akhada' in the area and arrested him. During police investigation, he admitted supplying injections purchased from Raju Shukla running a Pharmacy shop at Karolbagh New Delhi. Narcotic Bureau team during a raid arrested Raju Shukla who disclosed that he had purchased injections from a drug supplier Abdul Rahim a resident of Bara Hindu Rao at Delhi and during raid police team recovered 900 Pentazocine injections along with huge currency notes from him.

NIA raids houses of PFI members in Bengaluru and multiple locations in Karnataka

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) carried out raids at the Popular Front of India (PFI) offices and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) and the residences of the office-bearers of these two outfits across the state simultaneously. The raids which began early in the morning were carried out in at least 14 locations in Bengaluru, and other places in Karnataka, Mangaluru the district headquarters town of Dakshina Kannada, Sirsi in Uttara Kannada and Kalaburagi. According to reports, the raids were conducted after informing the local police according to information received here. As a protest many Muslim youth came near the places where the raid was going on and raised 'NIA go



back' slogans while NIA officials are conducting raids on residences of the members of Popular Front of India (PFI) in Bengaluru.

NIA officials are conducting raids on residences of the members of Popular Front of

India (PFI) in Bengaluru. The raids have been going on since the early hours of Thursday. According to sources the raids are being conducted in few places in the city - a flat in an apartment on Kannur Main Road near Bagaluru, a flat belonging to

Karnataka president Mohammed Shakib in Richmond Town, a house on Tannery Road.

Police sources said the NIA team detained a few key SDPI and PFI activists, seized documents, literature, computers, laptops and phones as well.

K. Raja Prasad Reddy elected President of INS

The 83rd Annual General Meeting of the Indian Newspaper Society - an apex body of Publishers of Newspapers, Magazines & Periodicals in the country, was held through Video Conference ("VC")/ Other Audio-Visual Means ("OAVM") today. K. Raja Prasad Reddy (Sakshi) has been elected President of The Indian Newspaper Society for the year 2022-23. He succeeds Mohit Jain of Economic Times. Rakesh Sharma (Aaj Samaj) is the Deputy President, M. V. Shreyams Kumar (Mathrubhumi Arogya Masika) is the Vice President and Tanmay Maheshwari (Amar Ujala) is the Honorary Treasurer of the Society for the year 2022-23.

Dalai Lama extends b'day greetings to PM Modi



DHARAMSALA: On the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 72nd birthday, the Dalai Lama has written to him offering his warmest wishes and prayers for his continued good health.

«It's wonderful that India has successfully met the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. Although we have not seen the complete end to it, India today is better placed to address similar challenges in the future. « His Holiness wrote in a letter.

«As the longest-staying guest in India I have observed its development first hand. Now the country is also a rising economic power and a leader in science and technology.

«India's strong democratic foundation is an example of peace and stability. Having one of the youngest populations is an asset that will enable further development and the fulfilment of positive aspirations. I am delighted to say India is poised to assume its rightful place in the world.

Ayodhya gets temple dedicated to CM Yogi Adityanath



AYODHYA: Even before the Ram temple reaches completion, Ayodhya now has a temple that is turning out to be a major tourist attraction.

A temple dedicated to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has come up about 25 kilometres from Ayodhya on the Ayodhya -Prayagraj highway in Bhadrasa village. The temple is located near the Bharat Kund. The idol of the chief minister shows him carrying a bow and arrow and an «arti» is performed at the temple every evening.

MISSION 2024

BJP set on Mission 80 in UP, many senior MPs may be retired



After winning the Azamgarh and Rampur Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh bypolls recently, the BJP has swung into action and is now preparing for winning all 80 Lok Sabha seats in the most populous state as per its 'Mission 2024'.

To win all the Lok Sabha seats in the state, the BJP has already started working at a fast pace on several fronts simultaneously.

The primary focus of the party is on the 16 Lok Sabha seats it lost in 2019 elections in Uttar Pradesh as well as the seats from where the BJP MPs have been winning elections continuously, especially those where the same party leader has won both the previous Lok Sabha elections.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues to remain the

party's most popular leader ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, but the popularity of MPs at the local level and their connect with the masses also plays an important role in determining the election results.

The BJP has cancelled tickets of its elected leaders on a large-scale to thwart anti-incumbency against them in different states many times in the past and the saffron party has benefited electorally. Therefore, MPs who have won consecutive elections from the same Lok Sabha seats on BJP tickets, especially those who have won in 2014 and 2019 elections from the same constituencies, will have to prove their credibility once again to retain their seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha election as well.

Fate of proposed third front to be launched by Chautala in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

Hoping to change government in the country as well as in Haryana state former Haryana chief minister Om Parkash Chautala now making another attempt in this regard to announce a third front to wipe out BJP government in the country in a hope to repeat action similar to one like in Bihar in recent past sometime. Information reveals, Om Parkash Chautala making efforts to launch a third political front in country on the eve of celebration of Samman Divas on the birth anniversary of his father late Tau Devi Lal also a former Deputy Prime Minister in the country on September 25 at Fatehabad. Om Parkash Chautala has been making continuous efforts to hold regular public meetings in rural as well as urban areas in Haryana state since after he was released from Tihar central jail after 10 years imprisonment.

Past scenario reveals, Tau Devi Lal had organized rallies in Haryana state in 1977 and



1989 to unite all political parties in opposition to face then ruling government in the state. About 33 years ago in 1989 he held a rally at Boat Club New Delhi when he was Chief Minister in Haryana to form a front against government. In the same way INLD supremo Om Parkash Chautala has now decided to make another attempt to unite all political parties in opposition once again to form a powerful third front in the country to face ruling BJP government in the country, although he remained unsuccessful in his previous effort, now hopes to be successful in his mission similar to as in case of Bihar state where Nitish Kumar Chief Minister separated himself from BJP alliance and formed a new government with the help of 'Maha Gathbandhan'.

Information reveals, OM Parkash Chautala has invited several prominent leaders in opposition from all over the country on the eve of 'Samman Divas' being celebrated on the birth anniversary of Tau Devi Lal on September 25 at Fatehabad which include the names of Nitish Kumar Chief Minister Bihar, Tejasi Yadav Deputy Chief Minister Bihar, Parkash Singh Badal former Chief Minister Punjab, Sukhbir Singh Badal Shiromani Akali Dal Chief as well as former Deputy Chief Minister Punjab, Dr K.C. Tyagi General Secretary JDU, Sharad Pawar senior JDU leader in Maharashtra, Chander Shekhar Chief Minister Telangana, Akhilesh Yadav former Chief Minister U.P., Sheikh Abdullah former Chief Minister J&K, Mamta Banerjee or Abishek Banerjee from West Bengal, Sita Ram Yechuri CPM leader, Hanuman Beniwal Member Parliament from Rajasthan and Satya Pal Malik Governor Meghalaya all have assured to attend Tau Devi Lal's birth anniversary.

Amit Shah congratulates joint forces for uprooting Maoists from Buddha Pahad in Jharkhand

Union Home Minister Amit Shah congratulated the government forces for freeing Buddha Pahad in Jharkhand after almost three decades from the domination of Maoists.

The Maoist-dominated area has been freed under Operation 'Octopus' of Jharkhand police, Chhattisgarh police, Telangana police, CRPF Cobra battalion, Jaguar assault unit and IRB on Wednesday.

«A historic milestone in the internal security of the country has been crossed. Under the leadership of PM @narendramodi ji, the security forces have achieved unprecedented success in the decisive battle against Left Wing Extremism across the country. Congratulations to @crpfindia, security agencies and state police forces for this, « Shah tweeted.

«For the first time, permanent camps of security forces have been established by successfully removing Maoists from the inaccessible areas of Buddha Pahad, Chakrabandha and Bhimabandh. Under the leadership of



@narendramodi ji, the policy of zero tolerance of the Ministry of Home Affairs against terrorism and LWE will continue and this fight will intensify further, « he said in another tweet.

The joint forces managed to free Buddha Pahad located in Jharkhand's Latehar district, about 150 km from state capital Ranchi. Buddha Pahad is spread in about 55 square km with one side connected with Chhattisgarh. It had turned out shelter of top naxal commanders of Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Telangana,

Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Odhisha. Jharkhand DGP Neeraj Sinha went to Buddha Pahad by helicopter a couple of days ago and congratulated the joint forces. He appreciated the brave Jawans of different units who established their camps in the Maoist-dominated area.

Operation Octopus was kicked off one and half months ago and it was completed on last Friday. The MI helicopter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was also landed on the top of the Buddha Pahad.

Have decided to contest for Cong president's post: Gehlot

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Friday made it clear he will fight for the party's president post and said irrespective of the outcome, it is necessary to work in a united manner and ensure the party emerges as a strong opposition.

Any call on his successor to head the Rajasthan government will be taken by party interim President Sonia Gandhi and Congress Rajasthan in-charge, Ajay Maken, he told reporters here. «I will fix the date (to submit the nomination papers) after going (back to Rajasthan), but I have decided that I will have to contest. It is a question of democracy and let us make a new start,» he said.

With speculations rife that Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor is likely to jump into the fray, Gehlot said other «Congress friends» may also contest but what matters is unity and the need to strengthen the



organisation at all levels.

«There are Congress friends. Even if they contest, there is no issue. After the results, we should work together to strengthen the Congress at the block, village, district levels and also move forward making our (Congress) thought process as the base so that we emerge as a strong opposition,» he added.

Considering the present situation in the country, there is a need for a strong opposition, the veteran Congress leader said.

Responding to a question on Rahul Gandhi's «one-man, one-post» statement made in the context of the Congress leadership role and asked for his comment on a possible successor if he wins the party election, Gehlot said Rajasthan state in-charge Ajay Maken and Sonia Gandhi would decide on the matter.

He was also asked if he would have a say in the matter. «I can't say that standing from Kochi. Our general secretary in charge Mr Ajay Maken and Congress president Sonia Gandhi will decide» on the related developments in Rajasthan and when it is to be done, he added. The Congress had on Thursday issued notification for the party president post.

The party is likely to be headed by a non-Gandhi leader for the first time in decades, with Rahul Gandhi indicating he is not going to vie for the top post.

Amit Shah visits Bihar, first time after BJP's power loss



Union Home Minister Amit Shah will arrive in Bihar on Friday, for the first time after the political upheaval last month robbed the BJP of power in the state.

Shah, a former party president who is regarded as the BJP's principal strategist, will spend two days in the Seemanchal region. «The home minister will reach Bagdogra airport around 11.30 am and proceed to Purnea in a helicopter. Late in the evening, he will leave for Kishanganj,» state BJP vice-president Rajib Ranjan told PTI. A series of meetings with party and administrative officials are scheduled during the two-day trip though the highlight will be a public meeting at Purnea, titled evocatively «Jan Bhavana Rally», in line with the party's stance that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has «betrayed public sentiments» by turning his back on the NDA as part of which he had won the mandate in 2020 assembly polls. The loss of power, in the third week of August, came as a rude shock for the party which had, less than a month earlier, held with much fanfare a two-day conclave in Patna -- attended by Shah and BJP president JP Nadda.

Former TN Chief Minister Palaniswami meets Shah



AIADMK interim general secretary and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Edappadi K. Palaniswami (EPS) met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Tuesday. This was the first time that Palaniswami is meeting a senior BJP leader after the controversial general body of the AIADMK on July 11 in which the former chief coordinator of the party, O. Panneerselvam was expelled from the party. During his previous visit to the national capital for the farewell function of former President Ramnath Kovind, Palaniswami did not meet any senior BJP leader.

Niti Aayog-like body to be set up in Maharashtra, says Fadnavis



An institute on the lines of Niti Aayog would be set up in Maharashtra for comprehensive data analysis and to make studied decisions on various sectors, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters here, Fadnavis said, «A delegation led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde met the chief executive officer and other officials of the Niti Aayog today. It was proposed that an institute of transformation on the lines of Niti Aayog would be set up to make studied decisions on various sectors. CM Shinde has given an in-principle nod to this suggestion.» Fadnavis said the institute would be named Maharashtra Institution for Transformation (MITRA), «which will be another milestone in the journey of fostering cooperative federalism under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi».

Sikh delegation meets PM at his residence



FW DESK

A delegation of Gurudwara Bala Sahib visited Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official residence on Monday.

They offered him 'prasad' and blessings and honoured the Prime Minister by tying a 'Pagdi' and offering him a 'Siropa'.

An 'ardas' was also performed for the Prime Minister's long life and good health.

The Gurudwara had organised an 'Akhand path' between September 15 and 17 to commemorate the Prime Minister's birthday. This 'Akhand path' was attended by thousands of Sikh devotees, a statement said.

The Prime Minister expressed his happiness on meeting the delegation and thanked them for their wishes and prayers for his well-being.

Three railway employees suspended in UTS fraud

SATISH HANDA

Three railway employees including Chief Booking Supervisor posted at Sangrur railway station were suspended due to fraud detected in unreserved ticketing system (UTS) at Sangrur and Dhuri railway stations in Punjab under Ambala Rail Division in which preliminary investigation revealed that tickets of short distance railway stations in machine were being converted to long distance railway station tickets thus putting excessive amount of fare in their own pocket causing heavy revenue



loss to railways. When fraud was detected at Sangrur and Dhuri railway stations and matter reached railway headquarters Baroda House New Delhi a three member railway vigilance team from Northern Railways reached at Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) office at Ambala Cantt which collected the file to investigate ongoing fraud not only

at Sangrur and Dhuri railway stations but also to check all UTS at other railway station in Ambala division.

Preliminary investigation revealed that large numbers of short distance tickets between Sangrur and Sunam railway stations having few kilometers distance with meager amount of fare were falsely converted to long distance railway stations in trains on way to U.P and Bihar thus putting difference of amount in fare into their pockets and cause huge revenue loss to railways. The practical demonstration was also given to vigilance team

in which while preparing a fake long distance ticket ink cartridge was removed from UTS machine at the time of operating machine on blank short distance ticket. Information reveals, Chief Commercial Manager Northern Railways has directed Divisional Rail Managers of all five divisions in Northern Railways to investigate similar frauds in UTS machines installed at all railway stations.

Hari Mohan Senior DCM told that a technical staff arriving to check all UTS machines installed at railway stations in Ambala division.

Odisha cabinet okays proposal to bring limestone under long-term linkage policy



The Odisha cabinet has approved a proposal to bring limestone under the purview of Long-Term Linkage (LTL) policy, in a bid to streamline its supply to the industries of the state. These industries will henceforth be getting their limestone supply through Odisha Mining Corporation Limited (OMC), Chief Secretary SC Mohapatra said on Thursday.

The proposal to bring limestone under the LTL policy was put forth by Industrial Development Corporation Of Odisha Limited, which has been merged with OMC, Mohapatra explained. Maintaining that the move will enhance limestone production and ensure its optimum utilisation, Mohapatra said the state exchequer, in turn, will be benefited.

27 Maoists killed, 1,131 held in J'khand since 2020

Twenty-seven Maoists were killed and 1,131 arrested in Jharkhand since January 2020, officials said on Friday.

A total of 108 gun fights happened between the Maoists and security forces between January 2020 and August 2022, and 45 Maoists surrendered before the police during the period, they said. The data was presented at a security review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Thursday, they added.

Top police officers of the state, including the superintendents of police of all districts, were present at the meeting. Stating that Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) has declined in the state, officials said that eight of Jharkhand's 24 districts are at present LWE-free. Twenty-five forward posts or camps have been set up in extremely Maoist-affected zones such as Buddha Pahad, Parasnath, Saranda, Podahat and Chatra-Gaya, they said. Besides, 15 additional posts are also being set up in the region, they said.



Soren asked officials to provide the benefit of government schemes to villagers in the Maoist-affected areas by setting up camps with police protection. «Basic facilities such as electricity, water and roads should be made available there. This will increase the credibility of the police among the people and help in controlling the extremist activities,» he said. «The items of daily need by the security forces should be acquired from locals in rural areas. This will give them employment as well as increase their income,» the chief minister said. Soren also directed for installation of signal jammers in all jails of the state to restrict criminal activities.



Halting rupee depreciation won't be easy

The rupee is yet again facing renewed pressure, along with major peers, as the dollar continues to strengthen in the wake of the Federal Reserve's latest jumbo 75 basis points interest rate increase and the U.S. central bank's unequivocal message that it remains squarely focused on taming inflation. The Indian currency weakened past the 81-mark against the dollar for the first time ever in Friday's intraday trade, before ending the week at a new record closing low. The rupee's slide was softened by the Reserve Bank of India's intervention to smoothen volatility; the cumulative impact of such interventions over the 12 months through September 16 have shrunk the RBI's war chest of foreign exchange reserves by almost \$94 billion to \$545.65 billion. The fact that the rupee is not alone in depreciating against the dollar can be of little comfort to Indian companies reliant on imports of raw materials or services for the smooth functioning of their businesses. They are struggling to contend with rising costs at a time when domestic demand is still to regain a durable post-pandemic footing.

So far in 2022, FPIs have in total dumped \$20.6 billion of Indian equity and debt following three straight years of net investments. And the Fed's projection of further steep monetary tightening, of at least another 125 basis points, is only likely to lead to more outflows over the last quarter of this year. With the rupee's real effective exchange rate (REER), or trade-weighted average of its value, also signalling that the Indian currency is still overvalued, the RBI's rate setting panel will have a fine tightrope to walk next week as it battles to restore a semblance of price stability without choking growth and by ensuring the rupee does not weaken too sharply.

LETTERBOX

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**A NEGATIVE MIND
WILL NEVER GIVE YOU
A POSITIVE LIFE.**

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ANURADHA M. CHENOY EXPLORES HOW THE REGION HAS BECOME A NEW AGENCY IN A CHANGING WORLD

The Global South's assertion



The international system is witnessing geopolitical changes and a push for competitive great power hegemony. The United States leads with its goal for primacy in the international system. The U.S.'s national security documents advocate curbing China's rise, weakening Russia's capabilities, securing Europe behind U.S. leadership and building satellite alliances with countries which conform to U.S. interests and values. But other players have different agendas and the Global South matters more than before.

China is the 'near peer', but in reality is no match to the U.S. militarily. Given its phenomenal economic reach that widened during globalisation, China began building counter institutions. It looked for accommodation with the U.S. in its 'peaceful rise' project. As the U.S. found this unacceptable, China turned from partner to competitor to threat.

Russia, with its vast natural resources and military capability, has shown capacity to assert its will in global geopolitics. The Russian aggression in Ukraine confirms the view of U.S. strategists who would like to weaken Russian capabilities. Further, they see Russia especially when in alliance with China or any other country as dangerous to U.S. geopolitics. Russian aggression against Ukraine and the terrible war of attrition have been a geopolitical watershed. The U.S. is using this conjuncture for global primacy. Europe is now firmly behind the U.S.'s strategic plans and is re-militarising. The developing Sino-Russian strategic partnership 'without limits' is the clearly defined enemy other for the West. So, the only speed breaker is the Global South.

Countries of the Global South, especially India, China and others, are being blamed for the failing sanctions against Russia in the context of the Ukraine war. The truth is that the Global South, with a few exceptions (except seven), wants a quick and negotiated end to this terrible war; all oppose the sanctions regime and all advocate neutrality. The reasons for neutrality include: the needs for regime survival especially because many in the South are dependent on Russian energy, fuel, fertilizers, wheat, commodities and

defence equipment. They have memories of colonialism and recent interventions such as Iraq (2003), Lebanon (1982, 2006), Libya (2011), Afghanistan (2001-21), Yemen (2010-on) Syria (supporting Jordan), Mali, etc.

Recent experiences such as the refusal by the West to grant a one-time exception for patents for the COVID-19 vaccine have not helped either. Media images of the way refugees from the South are treated in contrast to the welcome to Ukrainian refugees have revealed the unsurprising racism. Many countries of the South believe that they are unlikely to get western help when they need it the most. In such circumstances Russia is not seen as a threat in the Global South.

China's expanding military footprint is problematic for many countries in Asia. China's 'grey zone' policies — of creeping expansionism, violation of maritime zones in the South China Seas and elsewhere — have antagonised several countries which include Vietnam, Indonesia, India and the Philippines. But even then, most of these Southern countries would not like to be a part of security or military alliances with either the West or the Russian or Chinese sides. For example, the security pact that China (May 2022) offered to 10 Pacific island nations did not find favour with them (the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea, the Cook Islands, Niue, and the Federated States of Micronesia). They also did not agree to China's 'Common

Development Vision'.

The U.S. response to this neutrality has been to put massive pressure for sanctions on Russia and build threat narratives about China. But there has been an unprecedented pushback from the South that wants to make its own strategic choices. For example, the U.S. Congress recently passed a bill — "Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act" — that advocates pressuring, monitoring, and punishing African states and leaders who engage with Russia. In response, the South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor in a press conference — U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken was present — said no African country could be bullied and described this U.S. Bill as "offensive legislation". Ms. Pandor called for diplomacy and urged: "African countries that wish to relate to China, let them do so, in whatever the particular form of relationship of their choice" (August 22, 2022). She also reminded Mr. Blinken of the plight of Palestine under occupation.

On its part, China is waiving debt owed by 17 African countries (for 23 interest-free loans that were due in 2021) — as India did in 2003. There has been similar pushback from Latin America and the West Asian countries. Of course regional powers also work with the U.S. to project their own power — for example Saudi Arabia vis-à-vis Iran. Smaller states do a balancing act between regional powers — as Sri Lanka does between India and China.

Stronger countries of the Global South such as India have used their leverage to negotiate with multiple sides. India increased oil purchases from Russia, shrugging off western pressure. India has a military Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the U.S.; at the same time it has developed the International North South Transport Corridor connecting Russia and India via central Asia and Iran with three sanctioned states. It participates in military exercises such as the U.S.-led RIMPAC (the Rim of the Pacific Exercise, and one of the world's largest maritime exercises) but also sends a military contingent for the Vostok exercises (one of exercises Moscow routinely conducts) with Russia

and China. So, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey and others have developed the capacity to transact with competing and conflicting sides.

Moving to geoeconomics

The South's choices are extending slowly to geoeconomics. The fear of the U.S. strategy of freeing dollar reserves has made the South cautious. Further, there is the U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's recent announcement about U.S. trade policies of 're-shoring' and 'friend-shoring' — meaning trade between allies. This is leading the South to gradually find ways of bypassing the dollar in bilateral trade by using local currencies. Currency swap arrangements are used by China and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)+ 3 countries; India with Russia and 23 other countries. This does not mean the end of dollar dominance, but alternate paths are opening up for them.

In sum, the Global South has new agency. Multilateral institutions, ranging from BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the African Union, to ASEAN, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, have given it new confidence. Several countries including India, Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia and Malaysia have become economic powerhouses, albeit with their own inequalities and domestic problems. In these circumstances, neutrality and strategic autonomy have become a viable though not a normative option.

The Global South has made a statement on its development, for better terms for trade for which it needs strategic autonomy. If the Global South were to voice collective concerns on existential threats from climate change, ecological devastation, inequalities and increasing militarisation, and work in plural inclusive ways, it could make the world a better place for itself.

Anuradha M. Chenoy is Adjunct Professor at the Jindal Global University and former Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Views are personal.



MAITREYI MISRA ON WHY JAILS, MEANT TO FACILITATE REHABILITATION, HAVE BECOME DISEMPOWERING SPACES

What numbers don't tell us about prisoners

The latest numbers are out. 9,180 prisoners with mental illness, 150 deaths by suicide, five prisoners with schizophrenia and epilepsy have died.

While we know the numbers, we do not know what is being considered as a mental illness and whether these numbers are limited to persons who are in the mental health ward, or does it also include those who are living in barracks but still on psychiatric medication. We also do not know when the onset of the illness was and what the different illnesses were or how long they have been in prison for. The National Crime Records Bureau's (NCRB) Prison Statistics India Report is out for the year 2021. Perhaps it needs repeating, yet again that there is a mental health crisis in prisons.

We often hear that the aim of punishment (or at least one of its aims) is reform and rehabilitation. Yet when we look at the place where that punishment is served, we find conditions that, instead of promoting rehabilitation, ensure despair, hopelessness and helplessness. In any case, our prisons are not overcrowded with convicts, rather it is the undertrial population that makes up for over 70% of prison population. More than half of those with mental illness were undertrials (58.4% were undertrials, while 41.3% were convicts). However, the numbers could very well be higher.

For instance, Project 39A's report on mental health and the death penalty. Deathworthy, revealed that over 60% of death row prisoners had a current episode of mental illness, but many of them had not been



identified by the prison as needing treatment and care. Deathworthy also revealed that suicide had little to do with mental illness and a lot with absent social support, violence, distress, and despair.

India's National Mental Health Policy, 2014, considers prisoners a class of people vulnerable to mental ill-health. But while the NRCB gives us data confirming this categorisation, it does not take us much further towards crafting solutions, and leaves us none the wiser. Why do we have so many prisoners living with mental illness? Were all these prisoners living with a mental illness before incarceration, or did they have their first episode in prison? The system is not equipped to give us such crucial information.

Understanding these numbers in a meaningful context is important because without that our default response to this crisis will continue to be that of treatment and conver-

sations will get stuck at the poor healthcare infrastructure in prison.

To resolve the mental health crisis in prison, a purely medical approach will take us only so far. We need to take a more all-encompassing approach, move beyond treatment of individuals and towards identifying the social and underlying determinants of mental health in prisons. We need to look at mental health in prisons from a social and structural perspective as well. Otherwise, we might end up with a heavily medicated prison population, but not a healthy one.

Aspects of incarceration

There are aspects of incarceration that cause distress — loss of liberty, loss of close contact with loved ones, loss of autonomy. A certain amount of distress in the prison population is, therefore, bound to be present. However, firstly the conversation cannot sim-

ply end there; the distress must be addressed in a way which is not limited to medicating it away. Secondly, there are aspects of incarceration that are now assumed to be its common features, such as overcrowding and violence, but are certainly not inherent to incarceration. It would be absurd to think a population subject to persistent violence (of different kinds) will be healthy.

Anyone who has interacted with prisoners and prison officials will attest to the fact that each is suspicious of the other and the relationship (as skewed as it is) is based on mistrust and fear. Spaces which are meant to facilitate rehabilitation instead become spaces with further disempowerment and disenfranchisement.

It is no coincidence that these are goals that are essential for a mentally healthy population. Reform, rehabilitation or reintegration are meant to make prisoners confident in their lives, their choices and their ability to take decisions and be responsible and accountable for it. The process is meant to be empathetic and caring. Instead, it is violent, harsh and ultimately leaves the prisoner no better off, if not worse off. That there are high rates of suicides and mental illness shouldn't surprise us. It should, though, make us question the aim and effectiveness of our penal and social justice policy.

Maitreyi Misra heads Mental Health and Criminal Justice team at Project 39A, National Law University, Delhi. She is the lead author of Project 39A's report Deathworthy: A Mental Health Perspective of the Death Penalty. Views are personal.



BOOKS: REVIEW

Storytelling answer to today's biz challenges

Storytelling can be the answer to many of today's business challenges, says a new book by executive coach Jyoti Gupta who provides practical tips to master this business skill.

Published by Pippa Rann Books & Media and distributed by Penguin Random House India, "Business Storytelling From Hype to Hack: Unlock the Software of the Mind" tells how stories can work for different individuals.

"Despite being a professional novelist, I did not appreciate the value of storytelling in business until I was a fellow at a United Nations partner organisation. There, I realised that some of the best content came after and between presentations, informally - when people told stories," Gupta says.

He then applied his experience with fiction to developing and applying strategy, to executive education, and to helping business leaders find their own best stories and tell them more effectively in talks, in pitching ideas, influencing meetings, and steering organisations.

"When you have an important message, you need to communicate it so that it 'clicks' (makes immediate sense) and 'sticks' (is memorable, repeatable, and consistently acted upon). You can hack this communications challenge with stories," the author says. According to him, storytelling has become a buzzword in business, especially in marketing.

"Yes, stories hack the brain, but what you're really hacking is what gets in the way of a human connection. Think of it like shedding unnecessary baggage and cutting to the chase"

There is corresponding scepticism by non-believers as well as disillusionment by people who have either tried and not been satisfied with their own performance, or have tried and not been satisfied with the results.

Gupta says his book is about taking people beyond the hype. "Telling stories is a brain hack. This is your hacker's guide."

He says in business, we tell



Business Storytelling From Hype to Hack: Unlock the Software of the Mind
By Jyoti Gupta
Pippa Rann
Books and Media
144 pages, Rs 399

stories to get results, not to entertain. Even if the intended result is to build a genuine connection.

"Yes, stories hack the brain, but what you're really hacking is what gets in the way of a human connection. Think of it like shedding unnecessary baggage and cutting to the chase," he writes.

Stories, Gupta feels, are not merely for content creators and marketing departments.

"Storytelling in a broader sense - giving clarity, meaning and motivation - is something that is relevant to every department in every industry, at every

level. It is mission critical."

He says CEOs don't need to work out all of the organisation's stories, but they do need a working understanding of how stories operate and where they need deploying. They must have the important business skill: narrative competence.

This booklet, he says, is the "hack to understanding your ultimate communications hack".

Readers can explore the power of storytelling for seven key areas of life and business, from becoming a more interesting conversationalist to getting buy-in for an idea.

Gupta argues that storytelling is the quickest, cheapest and deepest way to more influence.

"Mastering storytelling can make you more successful, but perhaps more importantly, it will help you reconnect your life and business with your humanity and make you happier. It will help you hack yourself," he writes.

HP to create 2000 digital classrooms across Govt Schools in India

FW DESK
New Delhi

Continuing its commitment to enhance digital learning opportunities, HP India today announced it would enable up to 2000 digital classrooms under the HP ALFA (Accessible Learning for All) initiative. These digital classrooms will be set up in Government or Government-aided schools across 17 states for the students of classes 9th to 12th. The initiative is aligned with the New Education Policy (NEP)-2020 vision of the Govt of India goals.

HP is inviting corporate foundations and NGOs to participate in this initiative and the last date to submitting their request is October 07, 2022. HP will fund the capital expenditure required to equip each classroom with tech-



nology including Multi-function Printers, Webcams, a laptop for teachers, Smart TVs, Android boxes, and an internet dongle for connectivity. Implementation will be managed by the HP's NGO partner NIIT Foundation with active support from other corporations, corporate foundations, and Non-Governmental

Organisations (NGOs) as part of their CSR initiatives. HP, through NIIT Foundation as an implementing agency, will deploy cluster coordinators to monitor project implementation and progress across different clusters.

Ketan Patel, Managing Director, HP India said, "We are elated to introduce the HP ALFA

program and are confident it will pave the way toward digital equity for underserved communities. This initiative is a true reflection of HP's global vision to contribute to becoming the world's most sustainable and just technology company. Through this project, we aim to accelerate quality education for young

students and inclusive access to skills, knowledge, and technological expertise".

National Council for Educational Research & Training (NCERT)'s DIKSHA course content and syllabus will be used for the classroom learning program. The project will ensure that these students utilize the digital content and e-learning tools to the maximum and add further value to their learning journey. The project will also offer teacher training sessions in all schools, empowering them to use technology-led teaching to further integrate it into the classroom and engage students learning. The project will also look at partnering with individual State Boards and private content providers to use their specified course materials content in vernacular languages across select locations. Besides academics,

additional government of India approved programs and courses on EDP (Entrepreneurship Development Program) would also be offered in the project and be made available for students to aid their learning based on the requirement.

The project is divided into phases. The first phase includes Corporates, and Corporate Foundations, working with Government and Government-aided schools that have senior classes (Grade 9, 10, 11 and 12) in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Daman & Diu, Delhi/NCR, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Odisha, West Bengal, and Jharkhand that can apply to participate in HP ALFA (Accessible Learning for All) Project.

Flipkart enables 'Sell-Back Program' ahead of the Festive Season

CUSTOMERS CAN NOW UPGRADE BY SELLING THEIR USED MOBILE PHONES TO TRUSTED NETWORK PARTNERS, WHILE RECEIVING THE RIGHT BUY-BACK VALUE IN THEIR BANK ACCOUNT



FW DESK

Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, is enabling a "Sell-Back Program" ahead of the Festive Season. The program, while supplementing efforts toward creating a circular economy and reducing e-waste, offers a safe and convenient option to sell old phones to network partners. Customers can truly upgrade via the Sell-Back program by selling their used mobile phones while receiving the right buy-back value in their bank account.

An objective 10 grade system will guide the partners to value the used phones. The process is seamless and hassle-free with attractive value, quick payment, speedy doorstep pickup, and a safe and secure sale network for customers.

India is the second largest smartphone market and the fastest growing market for second-hand smartphones in the world. In 2021, around 25 million smartphones were traded in the second-hand market and are expected to rise to 51 million units at a valuation of \$4.6 billion by 2025, as per a report by IDC and the Indian Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA). Around 70% of people don't sell their old phones mainly because of the lack of a trusted platform that can provide good prices, the convenience of selling, and

assurance of data safety.

Flipkart is giving customers access to a strong and reliable re-commerce platform and the launch of the "Sell-Back Program" is a significant step in that direction. With the acquisition of Yaantra, which has a robust device quality assessment capability, Flipkart has strengthened its foothold in the re-commerce industry.

Commenting on the launch of the program, Adarsh Menon, Senior Vice President, and Head-New Businesses, Flipkart, said, "As the festive season approaches, more people look at options to upgrade and purchase the latest devices and mobiles. Consequently, there has been an emergence of an ever-growing market of re-selling devices which is highly unorganized, unsafe, and difficult to navigate. With the "Sell-Back Program", we aim to provide our customers access to a secure, convenient, and environment-friendly option that assures the best value and quick payment. We have received strong adoption and interest for this program, which witnesses approximately one crore customers every month from across the country. At Flipkart, we consider it a priority to work towards bringing smart tech-enabled solutions to customers and help in reducing the generation of e-waste, which is a crucial step in creating a sustainable economy."

Cricket Icon Yuvraj Singh is Hosting an Exclusive Stay at his Goa Home on Airbnb

YUVRAJ SINGH BECOMES FIRST INTERNATIONAL CRICKET SUPERSTAR IN INDIA TO BECOME AN AIRBNB HOST

FW DESK

International cricket icon Yuvraj Singh is becoming an Airbnb Host and offering an exclusive one-time-only stay for a group of six at his home in Goa, India. Perched on a hilltop with spectacular views of the sea beyond, Singh's home pays homage to the rich cultural heritage of Goa. Renowned for its pristine beaches, unique cuisine and warm hospitality, Goa is consistently one of the most sought after destinations for travelers in India and around the world.

Singh has delivered outstanding performances and career defining knocks throughout his career; he is now setting another milestone by becoming the first international cricketer from India to host on Airbnb.

Six guests will have insider access to the cricketer's three-bedroom holiday home filled with special memories and meaningful keepsakes from his years on the pitch. Bookable on [airbnb.com/yuvraj Singh](https://www.airbnb.com/yuvraj Singh), Singh's home will be available for INR 1212* per night - Singh's birthday and jersey number - for a two-night stay from October 14 - 16, 2022.



"My Goa home has always been extremely special to me. While my work takes me across the world, this villa is where my wife and I come together to spend quality time with our friends and family. I am looking forward to being an Airbnb Host and opening the doors of my home to a lucky group of six," shared Yuvraj Singh.

From its vantage point high on a hilltop, with 180-degree panoramic views of the sea beyond, Casa Singh offers a serene setting from which to explore the colorful charms of Goa's sun-kissed villages. Expansive decks and terraces burst with potted plants and greenery, dotted by pops of color from bougainvillea and other flowers. A luxurious pool features a swim up bar and several nooks for lazy afternoons spent reading or enjoying leisurely meals alfresco.

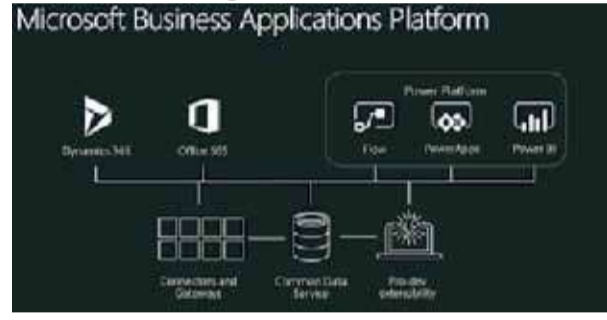
Microsoft Power Apps brings collaboration to center stage with 3 big announcements

FW DESK

On the first day of the inaugural Microsoft Power Platform Conference in Orlando, Florida yesterday, the company made three big announcements and feature updates, including:

Power Up skilling program: An upskilling initiative created to help individuals from non-technical backgrounds advance their careers with low-code technology and skills. Cards in Microsoft Power Apps: A new lightweight way to design and deliver micro-apps directly inside Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Outlook, and more with an adaptable user interface (UI).

Coauthoring in Power Apps: A feature enabling makers and developers to now design and develop the same app at the same time—just like coauthoring in



Microsoft 365. This is a big step forward for software development, allowing multiple makers to collaboratively build and edit the same app simultaneously. Enhanced SAP integrations: New and improved ways to connect your SAP data to your Microsoft Power Platform solutions.

Integrated virtual agent matching makers to makers in Power Apps: A conversational

bot (powered by Power Virtual Agents) designed to maximize and expand an organization's maker network. This Microsoft community-led event titled 'empower everyone' is a celebration of the passion and ingenuity of the Microsoft Power Platform community and will enable the pro/citizen developer community to build new skills with low-code technologies.

Bombardier Announces the Winners of its 2021 Diamond Supplier Program

FW DESK

Bombardier has awarded 18 of its suppliers with the prestigious Diamond certification, recognizing them for their excellence in operational performance standards for 2021, as well as for their commitment to continuous improvement. Bombardier presented the awards for outstanding effort to its Diamond Suppliers during a ceremony

in Montréal today. "Our business partners are key to our continued success, as they help us in delivering the world's best business jets to the market," said Shauna Gamble, Chief Procurement Officer, Bombardier. "I want to congratulate the 18 winners of our 2021 Diamond Supplier program and for working collaboratively with us and pursuing continuous improvement in light of challenges observed around the world."

PubMatic Puts Publishers in Control with Major OpenWrap Enhancements



FW DESK

PubMatic (Nasdaq: PUBM), an independent technology company delivering digital advertising's supply chain of the future, today announced a series of major investments in OpenWrap, the company's unified auction solution for publishers. Recent enhancements to OpenWrap give publishers, including app developers, increased flexibility and improved performance with omnichannel and platform-specific enterprise-grade developer customization.

As a leading independent wrapper solution globally, OpenWrap gives publishers more control over their programmatic advertising business. There has been strong momentum for the solution: As of Q2 of 2022, PubMatic revenue from OpenWrap has nearly doubled year-over-year.

Int'l Day of Sign Languages, KFC India encourages to #SpeakSign



FW DESK
Delhi

With an aim to spread awareness and acceptance about sign language as a mode of communication, KFC India is all set to celebrate the upcoming International Day of Sign Languages on 23rd September by urging customers to #SpeakSign. On this day, customers, and KFC teams across 33 Special KFC Restaurants, operated by 150+ specially-abled team members across 19 cities, will be encouraged to interact in sign language.

Creating a more inclusive environment, customers will be motivated to use less words, and more signs on this day. As a run-up to the day, short tutorial videos on KFC India's In-

sta handle, aptly titled 'Crunch Course in Sign Language', will guide customers on how to converse in sign at a Special KFC restaurant. On the day, customers will be greeted with interesting messaging as 'Give us a Sign' or urged to 'Kuch naa kaho' and communicate 'isharon isharon mein' at the restaurants. To promote greater awareness, a booklet that opens up into a poster for a 'Crunch Course in Sign Language' will be given out on all orders. This booklet demonstrates basic signs for catching up with friends and family over your favourite Bucket of KFC chicken. With signs for 'How are you?', 'What plans today?' to 'LOL' - customers can learn easy signs and make some crispy conversations over crispy food.

Team members will greet customers wearing #SpeakSign badges, and cheer them on to use less words, and more signs. Consumers successfully placing their orders in sign language can sport their support with a special #SpeakSign wrist band. This booklet will also be available across 600+ KFC restaurants across the country taking forth the brand's messaging with their ongoing KFC Kshamata initiative.

With the #SpeakSign campaign, the brand is aptly demonstrating their commitment towards strengthening gender and ability parity as part of the Kshamata program. The brand aims to bridge the gender and ability imbalance gap and increase the women workforce at restaurants by 2X by 2024.

Codex DNA Debuts Next-Generation Automated Synthetic Biology Workstation

BIOXP™ 9600 SYSTEM – A FULLY AUTOMATED, HIGH-THROUGHPUT BENCHTOP INSTRUMENT FOR SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY WORKFLOWS – EMPOWERS SCIENTISTS TO ACCELERATE DISCOVERY OF NEW VACCINES AND BIOLOGICS

FW DESK

A pioneer in automated benchtop synthetic biology systems, today announced commercial release and first shipment of the BioXP™ 9600 system, a next-generation high throughput platform designed to revolution-

ize synthetic biology workflows. The latest instrument further accelerates the design-build-test process of research and discovery by building biology overnight and at the push of a button.

The fully automated BioXP™ system enables scientists to overcome process limitations created by the turnaround time, cost, or complexity of alternative means of building or acquiring DNA and mRNA. The BioXP™ system provides over-night, automated synthesis of genes, clones, DNA libraries, and mRNA, enabling users to more tightly integrate design and build cycles, driving greater productivity and reducing time to answer.



"Codex DNA is committed to empowering and inspiring scientists to advance their discovery of life-changing vaccines and biologics. We believe the BioXP™ 9600 system, the third release on our versatile and powerful BioXP platform, can enable scientists to overcome inefficiencies in their workflows which limit their discovery. Demonstrating our commitment, we accelerated development of this system,

releasing one quarter ahead of schedule," said Todd R. Nelson, PhD, CEO of Codex DNA.

"The versatility of the platform enables us to release additional capabilities intended to optimize discovery workflows. Beginning in Q1 of 2023 we will release additional BioXP kits that enable scientists to begin the cloning, amplification, and mRNA synthesis process from the customer's own linear DNA or plasmid DNA. We believe providing scientists the flexibility to begin with their sequence, linear DNA, or plasmid DNA, will further expand the utility, speed, and impact of the system," said Todd R. Nelson, PhD, CEO of Codex DNA.

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



During the lockdown period, when business was at a standstill and workers were being fired from jobs, people had to work in two places to earn their living. It was time to work from home. From there the practice of moonlighting started, which is now emerging as a big problem in the IT sector...

With the passage of time new terminology comes into play. What was earlier called your own business, is now termed a Startup. Startup means the initial stage of a company. When one or more entrepreneurs start a company or project realizing the demand for a product or service, it is called a startup. One such startup with a billion-dollar value is called a Unicorn. Moonlighting is another new word being talked about in the corporate world these days. Its literal meaning is the light of the moon, but its actual meaning is also something similar.

Moonlighting is the practice of working for an external paid project while being full-time on the rolls of a company. Most companies have stringent rules that prohibit employees from taking up external work, except with mutual agreement. However, new age companies like Swiggy and Cred have no problem with such a behavior of their workers.

However, moonlighting can be existing anywhere, but the issue is more prevalent in IT companies. The problem came into the limelight when Wipro recently fired 300 of its full-

Moonlighting – a fancy name for a second income

time employees just because they were found indulging in the practice of moonlighting. Not only this, Wipro Executive Chairman Rishad Premji alleged that those Wipro employees were working part-time for the main rival companies, which is a morally unfair practice. During the Covid pandemic period, when business was at a standstill and people were being fired from jobs, many of them had to work in two or more places to earn their livelihood. It was a time for work from home (WFH) and people had enough privacy to work for anyone anytime. From there the practice of moonlighting started, which is now emerging as a big problem in the industry.

In the old times also, one had to search for a side income or a part-time job to increase the household income and it was not taken seriously. Now it's just given a fancy name - Moonlighting. Since it is a time to show off, they started



calling a side income job moonlighting, which looks like a very glamorous thing. There is a debate going on in the corporate world regarding moonlighting whether it is a wrong trend or the right step to pursue a moonlighting job. While Wipro's Rishad Premji considers it a 'criminal act', Mohandas Pai, former Infosys director, feels what is not wrong if someone takes up some other work in his or her spare time to increase income. He asked - "If I want extra income, I will work on Saturday. They can't stop me from doing this."

Rishad Premji said in an event of All India Management Association (AIMA) in New Delhi recently that employees can have a transparent dialogue with the company for their second or weekend work, but working secretly for our rival companies cannot be tolerated. In one of his tweets, he called Moonlighting outright fraud with the parent company. He wrote in the tweet - Moonlighting is cheating - plain and simple. Earlier, Infosys had sent a warning email to its employees that those found indulging in moonlighting would

be severely punished and could even be fired. N Ganapathy Subramaniam, COO of Tata Group's largest software services company, TCS, has opined that moonlighting can cause huge losses to IT companies in the long term. That is why this practice is ethically wrong.

IT companies are currently facing a double challenge. One is the lack of qualified staff, the other is problems like moonlighting and Quiet Quitting. Quiet Quit means secretly looking for another job in the market while working somewhere as a full-time employee. Also, doing only as little work as is necessary to keep the job going. Such employees do not work enough in the office and get detached from work or the company after the duty hours are over. As soon as they get a new opportunity, quietly leave their main job and vanish. IT companies hired over 1.20 lakh employees from April 2020 to September 2022, according to

IT market intelligence firm UnearthInsight. Apart from this, people doing freelance work were also given full-time jobs. In the second half of 2020-21, these companies hired 70,000 gig workers for full-time jobs. Similarly, 30,000 freelancers were given full-time jobs in the first half of 2021-22.

The hired freelance workers were mostly assigned the responsibility of testing, application development, maintenance, support, cloud, and microservices. In Indian IT companies, gig workers are paid only 50 percent as compared to full-time employees. They are also paid very less on average per hour because India does not have a fully evolved gig ecosystem like in western countries. Moonlighting is also rising because the gig ecosystem cannot be considered a substitute for full-time work. An UnearthInsight official estimates that some of the people who were earlier gig

workers may now be involved in moonlighting.

Due to the increasing use of digital technology, the demand for IT professionals is increasing in the Indian markets. Employment opportunities are being created in the technology, healthcare, e-commerce, and manufacturing sectors. The job opportunities in the field of Information Technology are much more than one can imagine. The way experienced and qualified professionals are in demand in the IT sector, qualified candidates are not much in supply. Since the desired candidates are not available in sufficient numbers, IT companies intend to increase the salaries of the existing staff to retain their qualified employees. Companies do not want to lose their existing employees. For example, HCL Technologies made a plan to give a stake to its 3000 senior workers in the company as part of the strategy to retain the talent.

Rupee slips below 81-mark against US dollar for first time in early trade

The rupee depreciated 44 paise and slipped below the 81-mark against the US dollar for the first time in early trade on Friday, weighed down by the strong American currency and risk-off sentiment among investors.

Forex traders said escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine and rate hikes by the US Fed and Bank of England in a bid to contain inflation sapped risk appetite.

Further, the strength of the American currency in the overseas market, a negative trend in domestic equities, and risk-off moods amid escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine weighed on the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 81.08 against the greenback, then fell further to 81.23, reg-



istering a fall of 44 paise over its previous closing.

On Thursday, the rupee plunged by 83 paise -- its biggest single-day loss in nearly seven months -- to close at an all-time low of 80.79 against the US dollar.

The Bank of England hiked its base rate by 50 basis points (bps) to a 14-year high of 2.25

per cent.

The Bank of Japan intervened in the FX market for the first time in 24 years to stem a falling Yen after it kept rates at record lows, IFA Global Research Academy said, adding that the Swiss National Bank hiked rates by a record 75 bps to 0.5 per cent.

The US Fed has hiked inter-

“All major events are over for this month as we await RBI’s MPC to give its verdict on September 30, 2022”

est rates by 75 basis points to 3-3.25 per cent.

On Thursday RBI was conspicuous by its absence from the spot market as the rupee fell by 1 per cent possibly as it wanted the rupee to do the catching up, said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury, Finrex Treasury Advisors.

“All major events are over for this month as we await

RBI’s MPC to give its verdict on September 30, 2022,” Bhansali added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, advanced 0.05 per cent to 111.41.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures fell 0.57 per cent to USD 89.94 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex was trading 558.59 points or 0.94 per cent down at 58,561.13, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 153.10 points or 0.87 per cent to 17,476.70.

Foreign institutional investors were net sellers in the capital market on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,509.55 crore, as per exchange data.

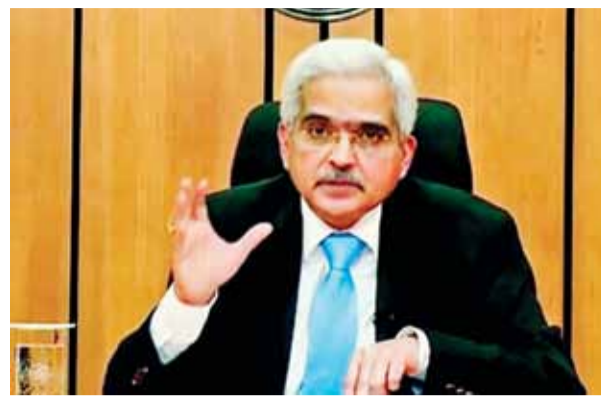
Policy rate hikes by RBI seem unavoidable in the face of global headwinds, inflation : ASSOCHAM

FW DESK

India Inc is bracing itself for yet another policy rate hike by the RBI Monetary Policy Committee in the range of 35-50 basis points as the move seems unavoidable in the wake of the global monetary tightening to limit the impact of inflation, ASSOCHAM has said. The Chamber has sought a balanced and smooth transition to the new trajectory for borrowing costs.

Seeking several measures for ensuring that adequate liquidity is maintained within the system, the ASSOCHAM has said “35-50 bps rate hike seems imminent and inevitable while the MPC may leave the CRR and SLR rates unchanged”.

ASSOCHAM President Sumant Sinha said while 35-50 bps increase in the benchmark rates seems unavoidable at this point of time given the continuous monetary tightening by the US Federal Reserve and other central banks. He however noted that economic activity is at robust levels. “India is in a sweet spot with growth coming from all quarters and inflation is relatively in control. Softening of crude prices will augur well for the economy and we should start the interest rate cut cycle from early part of FY24”.



“India is in a sweet spot with growth coming from all quarters and inflation is relatively in control. Softening of crude prices will augur well for the economy and we should start the interest rate cut cycle from early part of FY24”

particularly in Europe.

The Indian lending rates have to remain somewhat aligned with the global trend to ensure that the impact of the frequent rate revisions by the Federal Reserve of the US and several other central banks is minimised in terms of outflows from the emerging markets. Stability in our foreign exchange market is another «ask» before the RBI. Pressure on rupee against USD would be inflationary, the chamber noted said, appreciating the RBI for striking a fine balance in the forex rates.

On specifics, the chamber suggested continuation of the NPA classification norms following the outbreak of the Corona pandemic, for the MSMEs. It said MSMEs which got classified as NPAs due to pre-pandemic slow down, continue to face challenges by post pandemic disturbances. Hence, we suggest a one-time relaxation in Income Recognition and Asset Classification (IRAC) norms to MSME units which have been classified as NPA but continue to operate».

In order to encourage retail participation in the Government securities, the ASSOCHAM suggested tax incentives in different forms, including for the senior citizens and others.

Gold falls Rs 139, silver declines Rs 363



Gold price in the national capital fell by Rs 139 to Rs 50,326 per 10 grams on Friday amid a fall in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the yellow metal had finished at Rs 50,465 per 10 grams. Silver also fell sharply by Rs 363 to Rs 58,366 per kilogram from Rs 58,729 per kg in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was quoting lower at USD 1,665 per ounce, while silver was flat at USD 19.50 per ounce. “Gold prices have capped downside despite of stronger dollar over recession worries as the US Federal Reserve committed to raise interest rates,” said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities.

Air India signs agreement with Willis Lease Finance Corp



Air India on Thursday said it has signed a definitive sale and lease back agreement with Nasdaq-listed Willis Lease Finance Corporation for 34 CFM56-5B engines installed on its Airbus A320 family fleet. The engines will be covered under Willis Lease’s ConstantThrust, which will deliver significant reliability and cost savings over a traditional MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operations) shop visit programme, the company said in a statement. Under the sale side of the transaction, Willis Lease will purchase 34 engines from Air India, powering 13 Airbus A321 aircraft and four Airbus A320 aircraft, it said.

Punjab National Bank contributes Rs.24.90 Lakhs under Corporate Social Responsibility to TN Medical Services Corporation Ltd.



KULBIR SINGH KALSI New Delhi

Under its CSR initiative, Punjab National Bank (PNB), nation’s leading public sector bank, made a contribution of Rs.24.90 Lakhs to Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation.

The contribution was made towards constructing a recreation hall and badminton court for the benefit of front-line health workers.

The initiative took place in the presence of PNB’s P.Mahendar, Zonal Manager, Chennai, and Chetan Masoor, Circle Head.

PNB wins Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar

PNB won the “Rajbhasha Kirti” 2nd prize and Delhi Bank Narakas (Convenor: Punjab National Bank) “Rajbhasha Kirti” 1st prize for the FY 2021-22. These “Rajbhasha Kirti” prizes were presented to MD & CEO Atul Kumar Goel & Sameer Bajpai, Chairman, Delhi Bank Town Official Language Implementation Committee (Zonal Manager and Chief General Manager, Delhi and NCR, Punjab National Bank) in the presence of Amit Shah, Union Home and Cooperation Minister, Ajay Kumar Mishra, Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nisith Pramanik, Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs and



Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, and Darshana Vikram Jandoh, Union State Minister of Railways and Textiles, in the Official Language function organized at Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, Indoor Stadium, Surat. On this occasion, General Manager-Rajbhasha Devarchan Sahoo and Assistant General Manager-Rajbhasha Manisha Sharma, Punjab National Bank were also present.

Asian stocks slide for 3rd day on economic growth fears

Asian stocks fell for a third day on Friday after more rate hikes by the Federal Reserve and other central banks to control persistent inflation spurred fears of a possible global recession.

Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul and Sydney declined. Oil prices edged lower. Japanese markets were closed for a holiday.

Wall Street’s benchmark S and P 500 index fell on Thursday for a third day after rate hikes by central banks in Britain, Switzerland, Turkey and the Philippines. The Fed hiked its key rate on Wednesday for a fifth time this year and indicated more rises were on the way. Global equities are struggling as the world anticipates surging rates will trigger a much sooner and possibly severe global recession, Edward Moya of Oanda said in a report. The Shanghai Composite Index dropped 0.3 per cent to 3,098.87 and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng lost 0.3 per cent to 18,085.72. The Kospi in Seoul tumbled 1.5 per cent to 2,296.39.

Sydney’s S and P-ASX 200 fell 1.7 per cent to 6,588.10. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets declined. The S and P 500 lost 0.8 per cent to 3,757.99. The Dow Jones Industrial Aver-



age fell 0.4 per cent to 30,076.68 and the Nasdaq composite slid 1.4 per cent to 11,066.81.

The selling reflects investor fears the Fed and other central banks might be willing to tolerate a deep slowdown in economic activity to get prices under control. Some point to signs the US economy is cooling as support for the Fed to back off plans for more rate hikes. But chair Jerome Powell said on Wednesday that the Fed will keep rates higher for an extended time if needed to get inflation back to its 2 per cent target. US consumer inflation eased to 8.3 per cent in August from the previous month’s 9.1 per cent peak. But core inflation,

which strips out volatile food and energy prices to give a clearer picture of the trend, rose to 0.6 per cent over the previous month, up from July’s 0.3 per cent increase. That indicated pressure for prices to rise still was strong.

The Fed on Wednesday lifted its benchmark rate, which affects many consumer and business loans, to a range of 3 per cent to 3.25 per cent. It released a forecast showing it expects that benchmark rate to be 4.4 per cent by the year’s end, a full point higher than envisioned in June. Traders also are looking ahead to quarterly financial results from big companies. In energy markets, benchmark US crude lost

Markets continue to remain weak tracking bearish global trends

Equity indices began the trade on a weak note, falling for the third day running on Friday, amid an overall bearish trend in global markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 319.3 points to 58,800.42 in initial trade. The NSE Nifty fell by 90.8 points to 17,539. Among the 30-share Sensex pack, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, HDFC, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Axis Bank were the major laggards in early trade. However, Tata Steel, Hindustan Unilever, Sun Pharma, Infosys, HCL Technologies and Dr Reddy’s were the gainers. Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading lower. The US markets ended in the negative territory on Thursday. Meanwhile, the international oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.50 per cent to USD 90.02 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded shares worth a net Rs 2,509.55 crore on Thursday, according to data available with the BSE. “The global risk-off is gaining strength aided by the steadily rising dollar. Dollar is rising against all currencies and this will impact capital flows into emerging markets including India.

21 cents to USD 83.28 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose 55 cents to USD 83.49 on Thursday. Brent crude,

used to price international oils, declined 28 cents to USD 89.25 per barrel in London. It rose 63 cents the previous session to USD 90.46.



Seizure of Foreign Currency worth INR 6.05 Cr at SGRDJI International Airport, Amritsar

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Customs department at Shri Guru Ramdas International Airport have seized Foreign Currency worth INR 6.05 Crore.

Official stated that on the evening of September 18 during the course of security check of baggage of the outgoing international passengers by Airlines Staff on x-ray machine at International departure at SGRDJI Airport, Amritsar, some suspicious images in a bag were observed.

In an official statement here today informed that the Airlines staff subsequently alerted Customs officers on duty. Thereafter, Customs officers carried out profiling of the passenger and he was found to be suspicious. So the movement of the passenger was kept under observation.

The passenger, after handling over the suspected bag at the airline’s counter as check-in-baggage, proceeded for immigration check and got his passport stamped. Thereafter, the passenger was intercepted and asked whether he was carrying any excessive Indian



either in check-in-baggage or hand bag to which he replied in negative. However, his checked-in-bag, which was on Customs hold was called from the airlines and examination of the same resulted into recovery of 80 packets of foreign currency which was found concealed in specially made cavities. The recovered currency was *USD-755,700 - INR 5.95 Cr Saudi Riyals-26500-INR 5.43 lakh Rest Oman Rials and Kuwaiti Dinar-INR 4.5 lakh*

The passenger could not produce any evidence for its lawful acquisition, possession and exportation. Accordingly, the Passenger was offloaded. Follow up searches were carried out at residence and shop involved.

Yield Group of Companies Got AA Rated By 2 Int'l Rating Agencies



KULBIR SINGH KALSI

Yield Group of Companies has been rated by two reputed international agencies as low risk to work in the financial sector. The DCC (Dubai Chamber of Commerce) has rated Yield4Finance AA for the services being provided to the clients, and DNB (Dun & Bradstreet) has rated 1A With the constant efforts of Managing Director of Yield4Finance, Vipul Chadha, the company is attaining new success marks every day. Credit ratings are essential for firms to sustain in the densely competitive market. Furthermore, Yield Group of Companies is ISO 9001:2015 compliant to stay ahead of the market competition and is able to provide the most reliable services to their clients globally.

Tata Steel board approves merger of six subsidiary companies

NEW DELHI: Tata Steel will merge with itself six of its subsidiary companies, a statement said on Friday.

A proposal in this regard was approved by the Board of the company on Thursday, it said.

“The Board of Directors of Tata Steel considered and approved schemes for the proposed amalgamation of six subsidiaries into and with Tata Steel,” the statement issued by Tata Steel said. The subsidiaries are Tata Steel Long Products Limited in which Tata Steel holds 74.91 per cent equity, The Tinsplate Company of India Limited (74.96 per cent), Tata Metaliks Limited (60.03 per cent), The Indian Steel & Wire Products Limited (95.01 per cent equity holding), Tata Steel Mining Limited and S & T Mining Company Limited (both wholly-owned subsidiaries).

“Tata Steel Board approves the amalgamation of strategic businesses into the company,” the statement said. The Board



also approved the amalgamation of TRF Limited (34.11 per cent equity), an associate company of Tata Steel, into Tata Steel Limited. Tata Steel further said the proposed amalgamation is aimed at driving synergies, simplifying the group holding and management structure, and consolidating and strategically growing downstream operations and engineering capabilities.

The Board has considered the proposal based on independent fairness and valuation opinions. It followed the process laid down under the Companies Act, 2013 and Securities and Exchange Board of India Regulations.

GeM on Strong Growth Trajectory Across India

DOMINICK RODRIGUES Panjim

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has surpassed a “milestone” of Rs 1 lakh crore -- in a single fiscal year -- in FY 21-22, besides facilitating over one crore transactions worth Rs 3.02 lakh crore since its inception.

GeM is part of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

“The GeM portal is a win-win situation for vendors and the Government, and there is a large scope of for GST-registered traders in Goa to register on the GeM portal,” Vikas Gaunekar, Additional Secretary (Finance), Government of Goa and State Nodal Officer for GeM, said while addressing a GeM Seller Samvad in Panjim recently that was moderated by Gautam Kumar, Deputy Director, Press Information Bureau. “The Government is providing a fillip to the GeM portal which has total transparency and a prompt payment system,” he added.

Describing GeM as an interactive platform “contactless, paperless, and cashless, end-to-end” online marketplace launched on August 9, 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Nishant Deengawal, Director, GeM, States and Union Territories, told the meeting that the 62,000 registered government buyers and 50.90 lakh sellers across India highlighted the size and scale of GeM operations.

“Everything from a tiny Pin to even cement and Flight Simulators are the products in various categories that keep moving in sales on the portal,” he said while emphasizing that business were free to sell their general products elsewhere, besides also on GeM. To query about having a grievance cell, he said an “Incident management module is there in our portal.”

Meanwhile, the level of the GeM’s penetration into the national markets including



Goa could be witnessed in the response from the vendors/sellers at a meeting recently in Goa, where the local businesses highlighted their success in drawing business across various categories in the State. Kenneth Alphonso, GeM’s Goa Business Facilitator, highlighted the fact that GeM provided direct access to all government departments and direct real-time notifications to sellers for participation in bids.

Saiprasad Bhartu, Chief Operating Officer, Innovativa Waste Aid & Management Pvt

Ltd (Goa), noted that his startup drew business from the Government (70%) and private (30%) sectors. “We joined the GeM portal in 2019 and got startup exemptions that enabled us to get orders based on this from the State Government. Gem ensured cash flows and last year we did Rs 2.5 crores business which we expect to do better figures this year,” he said adding that the business included biogas plants, sanitary waste incinerators and wet waste composters. “We have been getting a tremendous response since registering on the GeM portal and my business has grown from Rs 2.80 lakh to Rs two crores,” Jyoti Rao Rerappali of Jyoti Enterprises said while describing her business as supplying manpower services.

Ashish Ranjan of Nidhi Enterprises, which deals with the Defence Sector, said registering on the GeM portal had drawn pan-India business orders and also witnessed increased trans-

parency in the growing numbers bidding. “We are operating in Goa since 2005 and came on board GeM in 2019 as we deal with the Defence sector including the Port Trust for electrical supplies,” he said.

Sumita Ranjan of Durga Sales and Supplies Company noted that her business had witnessed a doubled turnover since joining the GeM portal. Describing GeM as a “one-stop” online procurement portal since 2016 for all Government buyers including Central/State Ministries, Departments, Bodies and PSUs, Deengawal said GeM provided the tools for the procurement journey including e-Bidding, Reverse Auctions and Direct Procurement to facilitate Government Buyers getting best value for their money. He said that Rule 149 of Government Financial Rules (GFR) 2017 mandated all Central Ministries, State Departments, Central Public Sector Units (CPSE) and autonomous bodies to procure all common use goods and services from GeM.

SCO : Indian diplomacy's ace performance at Samarkand

India has asserted itself diplomatically by refusing to join an important pillar of the US-led IPEF, and at the same time Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Samarkand has demonstrated his governments resolve to act globally and resolutely in interactions with regional leaders.

The 22nd summit of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) took place in Uzbekistan's capital Samarkand, last week. The summit was held amid the growing geo-political turmoil set-off by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and China's aggressive military posturing in the Taiwan Straits.

China which initiated this regional grouping as Shanghai Five in 1996, has transformed the forum into an influential grouping of eight nations, with many more like Iran to join as a permanent member and diverse countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Belarus

and Mongolia being given Observer status, which shows its transformation into an influential regional forum, besides challenging to other western regional alliances.

In his address at the summit, Modi obdurately touched every relevant aspect of the current geo-political situation. He urged SCO to strive to develop reliable, resilient and diversified supply chains in the region. For this, better connectivity will be required, besides giving full rights of transit to each other, he asserted, in a veiled reference to Pakistan. He also battled for making India a regional manufacturing hub. On tackling the challenges of food security, he spoke of India's efforts to popularise millets as an alternative and cheap option.

In a speech that was otherwise free from references to India's regional issues on terrorism with Pakistan and on territorial



sovereignty with China, Modi called for greater cooperation in the Eurasian region. He also focused on initiatives on manufacturing that India is willing to pilot in the next year, when India assumes the chair of the SCO and hosts the Summit in mid-2023.

Modi-Xi Jinping meeting
The most important meeting from India's standpoint was a possible meeting between Prime

Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Everyone wondered whether roadblocks have been cleared and temperaments cooled after the recent success of commander level talks between two countries on the issues of Chinese aggression in the Ladakh region in May 2020.

But, officially the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) mentioned no such meetings. In

fact, Samarkand offered the perfect opportunity for two leaders to reset the ties. But there seemed little willingness from the two sides, to compromise. In fact, if the reports are to be believed, the exchange between the two leaders, reminded one of the cold treatment meted out by Modi to former Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif at the 2014 SAARC summit, though it eventually ended with a handshake at the last moment, but nothing such happened in Samarkand. But the moot question here is whether China is in a mood to mend ties with India?

Well, it seems no, not at the moment perhaps. Modi and Xi have met twice earlier but that is not enough to read each other's thoughts and also make a convincing and principled case, though both the countries stand to gain much economically, if ties are improved.

Prez Murmu meets B'desh PM Hasina ahead of Queen's funeral in UK



President Droupadi Murmu met with Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina here on Monday before the commencement of the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II.

President Murmu, who is in London on a three-day visit to attend the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II scheduled at Westminster Abbey on Monday, visited Westminster Hall here on

Sunday and offered tributes to the late British monarch on behalf of the Indian government and the people of India.

"President Droupadi Murmu met with Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and her sister, Sheikh Rehana just before commencement of the State Funeral at London," the President's official Twitter account Rashtrapati Bhavan tweeted.

World opinion shifts against Russia as Ukraine worries grow



The tide of international opinion appears to be decisively shifting against Russia, as a number of non-aligned countries are joining the United States and its allies in condemning Moscow's war in Ukraine and its threats to the principles of the international rules-based order.

Western officials have repeatedly said that Russia has become isolated since invading Ukraine in February. Until recently, though, that was largely wishful thinking.

But on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, much of the international community spoke out against the conflict in a rare display of unity at the often fractured United Nations.

The tide had already appeared to be turning against Putin even before Thursday's UN speeches.

Chinese and Indian leaders had been critical of the war at a high-level summit last week in Uzbekistan. And then the UN General Assembly disregarded Russia's objections and voted overwhelmingly to allow Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to be the only leader to address the body remotely, instead of requiring him to appear in person.

That shift against Russia accelerated after President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday announced the mobilisation of some additional 300,000 troops to Ukraine, signalling the unlikelyhood of a quick end to the war. Putin also suggested that nuclear weapons may be an option.

Indian mission condemns violence, temple attack in UK



India on Monday strongly condemned violence against the Indian community and vandalism of Hindu premises in the eastern England city of Leicester as it sought immediate action against those involved in these attacks. In a statement, the High Commission of India here said it had "strongly" taken up the issue and called for protection for those affected from the UK authorities following reports of clashes over the weekend in the city, described as "serious disorder" by the local police. There have been reports of clashes between Hindu and Muslim groups in the city since fans clashed following an India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket match at the end of last month.

Moscow-held regions of Ukraine vote whether to join Russia



Voting began on Friday in Moscow-held regions of Ukraine on referendums to become part of Russia, Russian-backed officials there said. The Kremlin-orchestrated referendums, which have been widely denounced by Ukraine and the West as shams without any legal force, are seen as a step toward annexing the territories by Russia. The votes are being held in the Luhansk, partly Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions. In Kherson, which is almost fully controlled by Moscow, the balloting was also expected to get underway on Friday morning. The vote, which asks residents if they want their regions to be part of Russia, is certain to go Moscow's way. That would give Russia the pretext to claim that attempts by Ukrainian forces to regain control are attacks on Russia itself, dramatically escalating the 7-month-old conflict.

Australia holds national day of mourning for British queen

An Australian national day of mourning for the late Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday centered on Parliament House, where dignitaries placed sprigs of golden wattle the national floral emblem in a wreath.

The focus at the ceremony at Parliament's Great Hall was a portrait of the former monarch of Britain and Australia in a yellow dress adorned with golden wattle motifs that she wore on her first night in Australia in 1954, known as the Wattle Painting, created by Australian artist William Dargie.

The queen's death on Sept. 8 came in the Southern Hemisphere spring when wattle blooms, its golden flowers and green leaves reflecting Australia's national colors in what has become a symbol of unity.



The government declared Thursday a nationwide public holiday and the ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Governor-General David Hurley, King Charles III's representative in Australia. Both had returned Wednesday from the queen's funeral in London.

The holiday has been marked by some protests that focused on the harm British colonization caused Indigenous Australians. Australia is one of the few former British colonies that never struck a treaty with the Indigenous population.

India-UK free trade pact is likely to take place by the end of October: Rajendra Ratnoo

FW DESK
New Delhi

"There is a considerable positive sentiment over the potential of the foreign trade agreement (FTA) between India and UK and the anticipated economic benefits to businesses on both the sides. The zeal and enthusiasm with which the FTA negotiations are progressing are a testimony to our commitment to double bilateral trade by 2030," said Rajendra Ratnoo, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of the Republic of India at the India-UK Business Outreach.

"The leaders of both the countries are committed to FTA and have set an ambitious goal



to gift it to people from both sides. Optimistically, it should happen by the end of October and will be a Diwali gift," said Rajendra Ratnoo, Joint Secretary, Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India at the India-UK Business Outreach at Trade and Investment Alliances was organised by the apex industry body, Associated

Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

Talking about the impact of the free trade pact on India, Ratnoo said, "FTA with UK is expected to provide certainty, predictability, transparency, and create a more bilateral facilitative and competitive services regime. FTA expands sector and corporation, enhances our exports by addressing market issues on both the sides and removing the restrictions which are impeding the trade on both sides. India is expected to register a quantum jump as the FTA will give a major thrust to Indian export and labour-intensive sectors like leather, textile, jewellery etc. Services like IT, ITES, nursing, education and healthcare are also likely to get huge thrust."

Israeli PM meets Turkish president, first time in 14 yrs



Israel's prime minister has met with Turkey's president for the first time in 14 years, the latest sign of warming ties between the two regional powers after a long and bitter rift.

The office of Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid said he met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, the largest annual gathering of world leaders now underway in New York.

In his meeting with Erdogan, Lapid said he commended the recent restoration of full diplomatic ties between the countries and the appointment this week of a new Israeli ambassador to Turkey.

The scene of Lapid, the Israeli caretaker prime minister until new elections in November, warmly greeting Erdogan could serve to bol-

ster his diplomatic credentials as an alternative to Israel's longtime former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu has billed himself as a world-class statesman, but relations with Turkey deteriorated during his more than a decade in power.

Erdogan has shown a willingness for warmer ties since Netanyahu left office last year. Over years of strained relations, Erdogan has been an outspoken critic of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. Israel, in turn, has objected to Turkey's embrace of the Palestinian militant group Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip.

The once-close regional allies withdrew their respective ambassadors in 2010, after Israeli forces stormed a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying humanitarian aid for Palestinians that broke an Israeli blockade.

China : Man missing for 17 days after Sichuan earthquake found alive

A man who was missing for 17 days after an earthquake in China's southwest Sichuan province has been found alive, according to local media reports.

The 28-year-old hydro-power station employee Gan Yu had stayed behind with his colleague Luo Yong after the magnitude-6.8 earthquake hit Sichuan on Sept. 5. The quake killed 93 people and injured hundreds.

Gan administered first aid for his colleagues and helped prevent flooding by releasing



water from the dam, according to the state-owned China National Radio. Both Gan and Luo then stayed in the station for over a day without food or

mobile signal.

The duo attempted to leave on Sept. 7, walking more than 12 miles. But Gan, who is shortsighted, had lost his glasses and

was having difficulties navigating the mountainous terrain, local media reported.

The pair eventually decided to split up, with Luo going off to find assistance and Gan staying put with some wild fruits and bamboo shoots for sustenance while he waited for help. Rescuers found Luo on Sept. 8, but when they returned to the spot where he had left Gan, he was no longer there. Finding only discarded clothing and footprints, rescuers feared that Gan might have succumbed to hypothermia.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Jaishankar arrives in New York



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has arrived here for the high-level UN General Assembly session, with a packed diplomatic week ahead that will include more than 50 official engagements including bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral meetings.

Jaishankar arrived in New York Sunday to participate in the high-level 77th session of the UN General Assembly, which kick-starts September 20 with the opening of the General Debate.

"#IndiaAtUNGA. Delighted to welcome our External Affairs Minister @DrSJaishankar who is now here to attend the 77th Session of the @UN General Assembly #UNGA. He will co-host & participate in several bilateral, plurilateral & multilateral meetings during this hectic week," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said in a tweet.

Mahsa Amini: Acting UN human rights chief urges impartial probe into death in Iran

Acting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Nada Al-Nashif today expressed alarm at the death in custody of Mahsa Amini - detained by Iran's "morality police" enforcing strict hijab rules - and the violent response by security forces to ensuing protests.

Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman from the Kurdish minority, was with her brother in Tehran when she was arrested on 13 September for what was perceived to be "improper" hijab. She fell into a coma shortly after collapsing at Vozara Detention Centre. Amini, who also goes by the Kurdish name Jhina, died three days later.

There are reports Amini was beaten on the head with a baton, and her head was



banged against the vehicle by the so-called morality police. Authorities have stated she died of natural causes.

"Mahsa Amini's tragic death and allegations of torture and ill-treatment must be promptly, impartially and effectively investigated by an independent competent authority, that ensures, in particular, that her family has access to justice and truth," said Al-Nashif.

Al-Nashif said the compulsory veiling laws remain of concern in Iran, where appearing in

Iran protests: Mahsa Amini's death puts morality police under spotlight

The death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after she was detained by Iran's so-called morality police has sparked angry protests, with women burning their headscarves in a defiant act of resistance against the Islamic Republic's strict dress code and those enforcing it. The Gasht-e Ershad (Guidance Patrols) are special police units tasked with ensuring the respect of Islamic morals and detaining people who are perceived to be "improperly" dressed. Under Iranian law, which is based on the country's interpretation of Sharia, women are obliged to cover their hair with a hijab (headscarf) and wear long, loose-fitting clothing to disguise their figures. Ms Amini allegedly had some hair visible under her headscarf when she was arrested by morality police in Tehran on 13 September.

public without a hijab is punishable by imprisonment.

In recent months, the morality police have expanded street

patrols, subjecting women perceived to be wearing "loose hijab" to verbal and physical harassment and arrest.

China's ex-justice minister sentenced to death with 2-year reprieve for corruption



China's former Justice Minister and top public security official, Fu Zhenghua, was on Thursday sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve for corruption and abuse of power, official media here reported.

Fu took advantage of his official authority or position to seek gains by helping others with their business operations, official positions, and legal

cases, according to prosecutors.

Fu, a former senior official of China's top political advisory body, the China People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), accepted bribes and abused his power, state-run People's Daily Online cited the Intermediate People's court in Changchun of Jilin province as saying in its

verdict on Thursday. Fu, who previously had also served as head of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, vice minister of public security, and the minister of justice, the report said, was accused of accepting money and gifts worth 117 million yuan (about USD 17.3 million) either directly or through his relatives.

Over a million officials of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) and dozens of top officials of the Chinese military were punished in the sweeping anti-corruption campaign carried out by President Xi Jinping ever since he came to power at the end of 2012.

Biden, Truss seek to smooth over N Ireland divide

US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Liz Truss declared themselves staunch allies Wednesday as they tried to patch up a divide over Brexit's impact on peace in Northern Ireland.

The leaders met at the United Nations two days after they attended the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in London, and Britain hopes the global goodwill toward the late queen will help smooth out bumps in relations with the US and other allies caused by the UK's departure from the European Union.

The US, in particular, is concerned that Brexit has rattled the foundations of the 1998 Good Friday peace accord that ended 30 years of sectarian violence. At the end of the 75-minute meeting, Truss's office said "the prime minister and



President Biden both agreed that the priority must be protecting the Good Friday Agreement and preserving the gains of peace in Northern Ireland".

Truss spokesman Max Blain said Northern Ireland took up a small part of the meeting at the UN General Assembly in New York, which was dominated by the war in Ukraine and concern

land," but subtly alluded to his concerns about her stance on the protocol.

"I am looking forward to hearing what's on your mind," Biden added.

Analysts say there is some trepidation in the White House that undercutting the Northern Ireland protocol could plunge Europe into trade turmoil at a moment when Biden is working mightily to keep the West unified in confronting Russia over its aggression against Ukraine.

Truss thanked the president and First Lady Jill Biden for coming to London for the queen's funeral, and described the United States and Britain as "steadfast allies." But she avoided referring to the transatlantic partnership as a "special relationship," shying away from the language her predecessors

sors dating back to Winston Churchill have used.

Biden said Britain was "our closest ally in the world."

Truss and Biden see eye to eye on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with Britain the biggest military contributor to Ukraine after the US.

On China, Truss's concerns about Beijing's "growing assertiveness" echo Biden's views. And the two leaders share a concern that China is outflanking Western democracies in wooing the developing world.

The UK government said Truss and Biden "stressed the need to end over-reliance on authoritarian states in terms of our energy, technology and manufacturing supply chains" and vowed to "redouble efforts" to reduce energy dependence on Russia.

Aamir Khan's DAUGHTER IRA, NUPUR SHIKHARE are engaged

Superstar Aamir Khan's daughter and theatre director Ira Khan has announced her engagement to celebrity fitness trainer Nupur Shikhare.

Ira and Nupur, who have been in a relationship for reportedly over two years, made the announcement on Instagram late Wednesday night.

In the video shared by the couple from an event in Cervia, Italy, Nupur is seen getting down on one knee with a ring in his hand and Ira accepting his proposal.

"Popeye: She said yes. Ira: Hehe I said yes," read the caption of the post.

Ira is the younger of Aamir's two children with his first wife, film producer Reena Dutta.



Samantha Ruth Prabhu-starrer 'SHAAKUNTALAM' to release on Nov 4

THE FILM WILL BE RELEASED IN TELUGU, TAMIL, MALAYALAM, KANNADA, AND HINDI

Multilingual mythological drama "Shaakuntalam", headlined by Samantha Ruth Prabhu, is set to be released in theatres on November 4.

Based on Kalidasa's acclaimed Sanskrit play 'Abhijnana Shakuntalam', the film is written and directed by award-winning director Gunasekar of "Rudhradevi" fame.

Billed as a whimsical tale, "Shaakuntalam" revolves around the epic love story of Shakuntala and King Dushyant, portrayed by "The Family Man" star Samantha and Dev Mohan ("Sufiyum Sujatayam"), respectively.

Production banner Sri Venkateswara Creations shared the film's release date and motion poster on its official Twitter handle on Friday.

"Witness the #EpicLoveStory #Shaakuntalam in Theatres from Nov 4th 2022 Worldwide! #ShaakuntalamOnNov4," the tweet read.

"Pushpa: The Rise" star Allu Arjun's daughter Allu Arha portrays the role of Prince Bharata, son of Shakuntala and Dushyant.

Sachin Khedekar, Kabir Bedi, Dr M Mohan Babu, Prakash Raj, Madhubala, Gautami, Aditi Balan, Ananya Nagalla and Jisshu Sengupta are also part of the cast.

"Shaakuntalam" is presented by Dil Raju via Sri Venkateswara Creations in collaboration with Gunaa Teamworks and is produced by Neelima Guna.

The film will be released in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindi.

Kamal Haasan resumes work on 'Indian 2'

Veteran star Kamal Haasan on Thursday started shooting for the remaining portions of upcoming film "Indian 2".

The Tamil movie is the follow-up to the 1996 vigilante action thriller "Indian", which also starred Haasan.

The actor, whose last release was the superhit film "Vikram", took to Twitter to share the update.

"#Indian2 from today. @Udhaystalin @shankarsham-mugh @LycaProductions @RedGiantMovies..." Haasan tweeted. Production on the Shankar directorial officially resumed on August 24.



Kamal Aggarwal, Siddharth, Rakul Preet Singh, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Bobby Simha, Guru Somasundaram and Samuthirakani also round out the cast of "Indian 2".

The film is backed by Subaskaran Allirajah of Lyca Productions and DMK Youth Wing Secretary and MLA Udhayanidhi Stalin via Red Giant Movies.

Spain female players to quit national team over coach

Fifteen female soccer players are expected to quit Spain's national team after their demand for a coaching change was rejected by the Spanish federation.

The federation on Thursday said it received identical emails from the 15 players saying they would renounce their places on the team if coach Jorge Vilda wasn't fired. The federation said that, according to the players, the situation "significantly" affected their "emotional state" and their health.

The federation did not elaborate on the "situation" or name the players who made the demand. According to Spanish media, Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas was not among them.

"The federation will not allow the players to question the continuity of the national coach and its coaching staff, as those are not their responsibility," the federation said in a statement, adding that it would "not admit any pressure from any player" when it comes to sporting decisions.



"These types of maneuvers are harmful and are not within the values of football and sports," the federation said. It noted in its statement that, according to Spanish legislation, not accepting a call from a national team is considered a serious infraction that could prompt sanctions between two and five years. The federation said it would not seek those sanctions against the players, but would not select them again unless they "admit their mistake and ask for forgiveness."

Babar and Rizwan lead Pak to big win over England

Babar Azam returned to batting form with a century and Mohammad Rizwan hit 88 in a Pakistan record-breaking double-century opening stand to beat England by 10 wickets in the second Twenty20.

Babar made an unbeaten 110 in his second T20 century off 66 balls as Pakistan reached 203-0 with three balls to spare to level the seven-match series on Thursday.

Moeen Ali accelerated at the back end of England's innings with an unbeaten 55 off 23 balls and led the team to 199-5 after he won the toss and elected to bat. "We planned to play according to the situation, and planned when to charge and when to hold back," Babar said. "The execution of that plan went brilliantly. When you have a target in front of you, you play according to that and change gears accordingly." Babar and Rizwan charged against England with



aggressive batting as the visitors couldn't hold on to their chances to break the stand.

Babar came into Thursday's game on the back of only 98 runs in his previous seven T20s that included 68 runs in the six Asia Cup matches in the United Arab Emirates and a knock of 30 in the opening game of the series on Tuesday. Rizwan profited from two let-offs before he had completed his half century, but Babar belted 11 boundaries and five sixes against both pace and spin. Babar and Rizwan held the previous record of Pakistan's 197-run, opening-wicket stand, which they made against South Africa at Centurion in 2021.

Australia is still awaiting word on whether he will be allowed to return to the Australian Open in January after missing the tournament this year because he is not vaccinated against COVID-19.

"It's really not in my hands right now," Djokovic said on Thursday at the Laver Cup. "So I'm hoping I will get some positive news."

Djokovic is a 21-time Grand Slam singles champion a total that stands second among men, behind only Rafael Nadal's 22 and one ahead of Roger Federer's 20 and he has won a record nine of those trophies at Melbourne Park.

But he was deported from Australia last January after a 10-day legal saga that culminated with his visa being revoked; he originally was granted an exemption to strict vaccination rules by two medical panels and Tennis Australia in order to play in the Australian Open.

Australia has since changed its border rules since July 6, incoming travelers no longer have to have proof of COVID-19 vaccinations, or even provide a negative COVID test.

The Australian Border Force said after Djokovic's visa was canceled that "a person whose visa has been cancelled may be subject to a three-year exclusion period that prevents the grant of a further temporary visa."

However, it added: "The exclusion period will be considered as part of any new visa application and can be waived in certain circumstances, noting each case is assessed on its own merits."

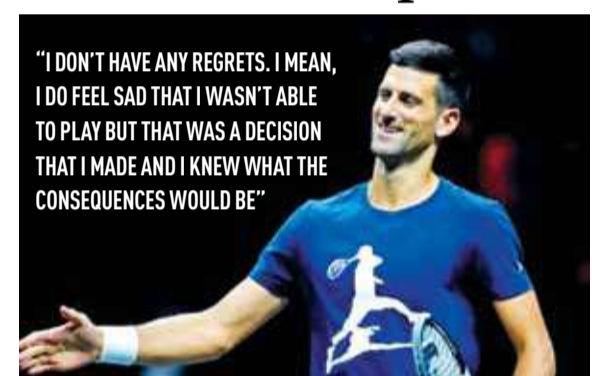
A Tennis Australia spokesperson said on Friday that any decision on Djokovic's visa for the Jan. 16-29, 2023 tournament was not its to make.

The 35-year-old Djokovic, who is from Serbia, insisted he will not get the shots against the illness caused by the coronavirus, even if it means missing tennis events.

He was not able to enter two of this season's four Grand Slam tournaments, including the US Open that ended this month. The United States and Canada currently bar entry to foreign citizens who have not received COVID-19 vaccines, and so he also missed four other events in North America in 2022. Djokovic was able to get into France, losing to Rafael Nadal in the quarterfinals at the French Open in June, and England, winning the title at Wimbledon in July.

The Laver Cup, which begins Friday, is Djokovic's first competition since Wimbledon.

Unvaccinated Novak Djokovic awaiting word on Australian Open



"I DON'T HAVE ANY REGRETS. I MEAN, I DO FEEL SAD THAT I WASN'T ABLE TO PLAY BUT THAT WAS A DECISION THAT I MADE AND I KNEW WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE"

Novak Djokovic is still awaiting word on whether he will be allowed to return to the Australian Open in January after missing the tournament this year because he is not vaccinated against COVID-19.

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Indian painter Jagjit Singh Rubal gives final touches to a painting made as a tribute to the Britain's late Queen Elizabeth II, light candles in front of a portrait of the late Queen to pay tribute in Amritsar. PHOTOS-PRABHJOT GILL

Raju Srivastava cremated, son Ayushmaan performs last rites



NEW DELHI: Popular comedian Raju Srivastava, who passed away on September 21 after a 40 day battle in the ICU at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), has been cremated at the Nigambodh Ghat in New Delhi.

Raju Srivastava had suffered a heart attack on August 10 while working out in a gym. He was then rushed to AIIMS. Since then, he was on a ventilator.

FX renews 'Reservation Dogs' for season three on Hulu

Critically-acclaimed series "Reservation Dogs" will return for a third season on streaming platform Hulu, FX Network has announced.

The development comes as the series, created by Sterlin Harjo and Taika Waititi, is still airing its second season. Season two will conclude on September 28. The third season is expected to debut in 2023.

Nick Grad, president of original programming for FX, said the network is proud to partner with Hulu to order a third season featuring an amazing cast.

"Reservation Dogs" continues its remarkable run with critics, fans and awards all recognizing the singular brilliance of the series created by Sterlin Harjo and Taika Waititi," Grad said in a statement as quoted by entertainment website Variety.



The series centres on four Native American teenagers, played by D'Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai, Devery Jacobs, Paulina Alexis, and Lane Factor, coming of age on a reservation in Oklahoma. According to FX, every writer, director and series regular on the show is Indigenous.

Harjo said he couldn't be more proud of the show that he created with his friend Waititi.

Shibasish Sarkar to head Producers Guild of India



Film industry professional Shibasish Sarkar was unanimously elected as the president of the Producers Guild of India.

Sarkar was elected at the first meeting of the Guild's newly constituted Guild Council of Management. Siddharth Roy Kapur, the incumbent president of the Guild, said he is delighted to pass the baton to Sarkar.

It has been a pleasure and an honour serving the production fraternity and I am delighted to pass the baton on to the able hands of Shibasish. I am sure he will do a stellar job and add further lustre to the Guild's reputation of spearheading the industry's interests," Roy Kapur said in a statement.

Sarkar, who has close to three decades of corporate experience in handling multiple verticals across films, television, anima-

tion, gaming content and operations of digital & new media platforms, said he looks forward to building on what his predecessor has accomplished.

In his six years as Guild president, Siddharth has been a tireless, passionate and committed champion for our industry at a time of unprecedented challenges. I look forward to building on what he has accomplished and working alongside my colleagues to help address the challenges we have before us as an industry," he said.

Sarkar is the chairman and CEO of International Media Acquisition Corp. He has also served as the Group CEO at Reliance Entertainment, a part of the Reliance ADA group and held senior positions at Viacom18, UTV Disney and Godrej Sara Lee.

Kate Winslet taken to hospital after fall while filming in Croatia

Actress Kate Winslet is ready to get back to work after a hospital visit post she slipped while filming an upcoming project in Croatia. The actress was shooting her role in the historical drama film 'Lee' when an on-set accident led to her being taken to a nearby hospital to ensure that she was OK, her representatives confirmed to The Hollywood Reporter.

Winslet will resume filming this week as scheduled. "Kate slipped and was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure required by the production," her team said. "She is fine and will be filming, as planned, this week." The 46-year-old Oscar winner will portray photographer Lee Miller in the film that focuses on her life, including her work as a war correspondent for Vogue during World War II.



The cast for director Ellen Kuras' movie includes Marion Cotillard, Jude Law, Andrea Riseborough and Josh O'Connor. Winslet, who has a role in the

upcoming Avatar: The Way of Water, was most recently seen on the small screen with aMare of Easttown, which earned her an Emmy Award last year. Recent film credits include 'Ammonite', 'Blackbird' and 'The Mountain Between Us'.

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