

REGION

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CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL HOSTS SANITATION WORKER FROM AHMEDABAD OVER LUNCH

CM Arvind Kejriwal announces 15-point Winter Action Plan to curb air pollution

DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday announced the 15-point Winter Action Plan to curb air pollution in the national capital ahead of the approaching cold season.

«As the winter sets in, we often see a spike in the pollution levels. The Delhi government in consultation with several agencies have prepared the plan to curb air pollution,» Kejriwal said. He added that the city's 2 crore inhabitants and the government have worked very hard to reduce air pollution, which has significantly brought down the levels. «As per a report by the Centre's National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), the pollution in the city has reduced significantly in 2021-22 as compared to four years ago,» the Chief Minister said, adding that the PM10 level has come down by 18.6 per cent.

He also said that the 24-hour electricity supply in the capital has also contributed significantly to reduce pollution by bringing down the usage of generators. Kejriwal further said that shutting down of two thermal power plants which were responsible for generating fly ash, Delhi has become a model state. Talking about other steps that have helped reducing pollution in the city, he mentioned a rising green cover in the city, electric vehicles policy, and peripheral expressway among, others.



The Chief Minister further said that along with IIT-Kanpur, data is being collected on the likely causes for pollution in Delhi, adding that a super site has been formed, 8, 500 Paryavan Mitras have been set up, as well as an e-waste park to dispose electronic waste.

Kejriwal said that to increase green cover, the government had aimed to plant 42 lakh trees. «A 24x7 green war room would be functional from October 3 where a nine-member expert team would be doing constant analysis to prepare a plan. We had made a green Delhi app about two years ago. So far, 53, 000 complaints have been received. I would encourage you to continue sharing feedback on this,» he added.

He also said that the Graded Response Action Plan would be followed to forecast for three days at a time and urged neighbouring states to make sure that most vehicles coming from outside run on CNG.

cover in the city, electric vehicles policy, and peripheral expressway among, others.

The Chief Minister however, said that air pollution due to stubble burning remains a top concern at this time of the year. A bio-decomposer prepared by the PUSA Institute would be given to farmers for free, while

an anti-dust campaign will start from October 6, Kejriwal noted, adding that active monitoring will be carried out by 586 teams. He further said that for vehicular pollution, around 380 teams have been formed to check enforcement of the PUC policy and ban will continue to remain on firecrackers like every year.

BANKING & FINANCE

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RESERVE BANK OF INDIA INCREASES REPO RATE BY 50 BASIS POINTS

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POTPOURRI

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KASHMIR IS BACK ON THE CINEMA MAP

Karnataka has immense scope for millets: FinMin

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sep.29 emphasised on the immense scope of millets, especially for Karnataka which is a leading producer of the crop, as she said that start-ups can look at the possibilities of its packaging and speedier marketing.

Addressing the annual general meeting of the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Bengaluru, she said that India will assume the presidency of G20 (from December 1, 2022 till November 30, 2023) and there are several destinations in Karnataka where G20 meetings will be held. «I hope and wish and will certainly do my bit for Karnataka to do its branding and to identify those products which can be showcased in G20 meetings,» she said, as per a tweet from her office's handle.

«In 2016-17, as an MP from Karnataka, I had come up with the idea of having co-working space in Mangaluru for start-ups.



It has now become very popular among youth and is seeing 80-85 per cent occupancy. People are now seeing the meaning of such an exercise,» she said, as per another tweet.

Earlier this week, during his monthly broadcast «Mann Ki Baat», Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that 2023 will be celebrated as the International Year of Millets. The UN General Assembly in April 2021 had adopted a resolution which was sponsored by India and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets, with the objective of increasing public awareness about the health benefits of millets.

GST revenue in September likely at Rs 1.45 lakh cr

Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue mop-up in September is expected to be around Rs 1.45 lakh crore, an official said.

The collection has been over Rs 1.4 lakh crore since March and in August it was Rs 1.43 lakh crore.

«The collection in September is likely to be little more than Rs 1.45 lakh crore. Improved business activity is expected to yield better collections in coming months,» the official said.

Official revenue figures will be released on October 1. The mop-up in September last year was Rs 1.17 lakh crore.

The official further said as per estimates, the average yearly revenue from GST in 2022-23 is expected to be around Rs 1.55 lakh crore.

The collection in April was at a record high of Rs 1.68 lakh crore. In May, GST revenue was Rs 1.41 lakh crore, in June Rs 1.44 lakh crore, Rs 1.49 lakh crore (July) and Rs 1.43 lakh crore (August).

RACE FOR CONG PREZ: Mallikarjun Kharge, Shashi Tharoor & Jharkhand's K N Tripathi in fray

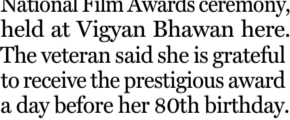


NEW DELHI: The stage was set on Friday for a contest between the Mallikarjun Kharge and Shashi Tharoor for the Congress president's post with the Dalit leader from Karnataka emerging as the clear favourite. The third candidate in the fray, K N Tripathi, a former minister in Jharkhand, is considered a lightweight for the contest. Kharge, Tharoor and Tripathi filed nominations on the last day which saw the AICC headquarters come back to life after long, with workers swarming the complex.

Veteran star Asha Parekh receives Dada Saheb Phalke award

Veteran actor Asha Parekh was on Friday honoured with the Dada Saheb Phalke award, the highest recognition in the field of Indian cinema.

Asha Parekh, 79, was presented the award by President Droupadi Murmu during the 68th National Film Awards ceremony, held at Vigyan Bhawan here. The veteran said she is grateful to receive the prestigious award a day before her 80th birthday.



BSF seized 2 packets of Heroin at Indo-Pak border



Border security Force here today have seized two packets of heroin with a gross weight 2.180 kgs.

In a statement issued here, BSF official stated that on today during afternoon hours, forward deployed BSF troops noticed something suspicious items lying in the farming field in the area falling near village - Bhopal, under Amritsar district. Further, during search of the area, BSF troops recovered two packets of narcotics substance suspected to be Heroin (gross wt. - 2.180 kgs), wrapped in yellow adhesive tape.

President Droupadi Murmu Inaugurates Historic World Famous Mysore Dussehra Festival in Mysore

ARUNKUMAR RAO

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Historic world famous Mysore Dussehra festival on Monday by offering a special puja to Goddess Chamundeswari at Chamundi hill. This is the first time that the President inaugurated the Dussehra festival and her first visit to the state as the president of India. The festival begins on the first day of Navratri with nightly pujas and ends with the Jambusawari procession on the day of Vijayadashami.

Earlier Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai along with Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot welcomed president Murmu at the Mysuru airport and felicitated her. After formal light lamping ceremony at Chamundi Hills, Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the 10-day Mysuru Dasara festival. Like every dussehra, the streets of Mysuru were already lit up with colourful lights as the city is going to witness a grand festival celebration for the next few days. Starting from Monday, the celebrations will go on till October 5. Lakhs of tourists expected to visit Mysuru this year to experience the grand



celebrations.

According to the statement issued by Rashtrapati Bhavan, the president will attend a felicitation function, 'Poura Sanmana', which will be organised by the Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation in Hubli. She will later inaugurate the new campus of the Indian Institute of Information Technology in Dharwad.

According to HAL statement President Droupadi Murmu will Inaugurate HAL's State-of-art integrated Cryogenic Engine Manufacturing Facility (ICMF) on Tuesday. This facility will cater to the entire Rocket Engine Manufacturing under one roof for ISRO and boost self-reliance in manufacturing of high-thrust rocket engines. The Facility is set up over an area of 4500 sq mts housing over 70 hit-tech equipment and testing facilities for manufacturing Cryogenic (CE20) and Semi-cryogenic (SE2000) Engines of Indian Space Launch Vehicles.

Dussehra festival will be held for starting from Monday till October 5 and For this Rs. 36 crores has been allocated by the Karnataka government according to sources.

Ghulam Nabi Azad launches Democratic Azad Party in J&K



JAMMU: Ghulam Nabi Azad, who recently parted ways with the Congress, on Monday launched his new party -- the Democratic Azad party (DAP).

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister had ended his more than five-decade-long association with the Congress on August 26.

«I am launching Democratic Azad Party (DAP) from here today. It symbolises democracy and freedom of speech and thought. Our ideology will be based on the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi,» Azad said during a press conference here.

Azad said the DAP will have «no competition» with any other political party and it will focus on «strengthening» peace and normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. Over two dozen prominent Congress leaders, including former deputy chief minister Tara Chand, had resigned from the Congress in support of Azad.

Centre govt should file review petition in Supreme Court against HSGMC Act, 2014 : Dhami

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee President Harjinder Singh Dhami on Thursday wrote a letter to Home Minister of India, Amit Shah, demanding that the Government of India should file a review petition against the Supreme Court judgment upholding validity of Haryana Sikh Gurdwara (Management) Act, 2014.

In his letter to the Home Minister, SGPC President said that the right to make any amendment in the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925, with recommendations of SGPC, is only with the Government of India, according to which, the state governments cannot make any interference in this Act of 1925. He said the Act passed by the Haryana government for establishing a separate Gurdwara management for the state is unconstitutional and its validity should be cancelled immediately.

He demanded that the Government of India should file a review petition and should immediately pass an ordinance in the Parliament to undo the effects of HSGMC, Act, 2014.

He said that the SGPC came into existence before independence after great sacrifices and with its foundation, the path for India's independence was rooted. Any act of breaking this constitutional organisation will not be accepted at any cost.

Notably, SGPC in its executive committee meeting on September 23, 2022, at Chandigarh has also decided to file a review petition against the Supreme Court judgment (related to HSGMC Act, 2014) dated September 20, 2022.

He said that the Supreme Court's validation of the HSGMC Act, 2014, has affected the SGPC greatly and with this judgment, Haryana



Sikhs have been separated from the central Sikh body. He said that with this decision, the Sikh community is feeling divided and it is directly looking at biased and politically motivated judgment.

Meanwhile, he has termed the support to HSGMC Act by some Sikh leaders of Haryana and those related to BJP as creating divisions among the Sikh community.

He said a BJP leader sitting on a constitutional post is advocating for the All India Sikh Gurdwaras Act, while he is silent on direct interference in the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925, by establishing a separate Haryana Gurdwara Committee. He said it is a dual policy, which is being adopted deliberately to create doubts in the community.

SGPC President questioned whether these leaders can answer that a state government can make any amendment or interfere in the jurisdiction of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925? He said the SGPC is also in favour of the All India Sikh Gurdwaras Act, but it can never accept that jurisdiction of SGPC, established after great sacrifices, is affected.

Govt bans PFI, associates for alleged terror activities

Popular Front of India (PFI), which has allegedly been involved in a series of violence and has «links» with global terror groups like ISIS, has been banned by the Centre along with its several associates for five years following the second round of crackdown against its leaders.

The organisations which were also declared banned under the stringent anti-terror law UAPA include Rehab India Foundation (RIF), Campus Front of India (CF), All India Imams Council (AIC), National Confederation of Human Rights Organisation (NCHRO), National Women's Front, Junior Front, Empower India Foundation and Rehab Foundation, Kerala.

More than 150 people allegedly linked with PFI were detained or arrested in raids across seven states on Tuesday, five days after a similar pan-India crackdown against the 16-year-old group had led to the arrest of over a hundred of its activities and seizure of several dozen properties.

In a late Tuesday night notification, the Union Home Ministry said some of the PFI's founding members are the leaders of the Students Islamic Movement of



India (SIMI) and the PFI has linkages with Jamat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). Both JMB and SIMI are proscribed organisations. It said there had been many instances of international linkages of PFI with global terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

The PFI and its associates or affiliates or fronts have been working covertly to increase the radicalisation of one community by promoting a sense of insecurity in the country, which is substantiated by the fact that some PFI cadres have joined international terrorist organisations, the notification claimed

«Whereas, the Central government, having regard to the above circumstances, is of the firm opinion that it is necessary to declare the PFI and its associates or affiliates or fronts association outlawed with immediate effect, and accordingly, in exercise of the powers conferred by the proviso to sub-section (3) of section 3 of the said Act, declares it as outlawed,» it said.

The Home Ministry said Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat governments had also recommended a ban on PFI.

It claimed that PFI and its associates or affiliates or fronts have been involved in violent terrorist activities with an intent

PFI's Twitter handle taken down

Twitter handle of the Popular Front of India (PFI) was taken down on Thursday, a day after the group was banned by the government for five years for allegedly having «links» with global terror organisations like the ISIS and trying to spread communal hatred in the country.

«Account Withheld. @PFIOfficial's account has been withheld in India in response to a legal demand,» a message in the page read.

The PFI was accused of indulging in «disturbing» communal and secular fabric of the country and «posing a grave threat» to the national security by advancing its radical ideology and calling for



establishment of political Islam in India besides allegedly carrying out targeted killings of Hindu activists.

The PFI, the home ministry alleged, is encouraging and trying to enforce a terror-based regressive regime, continue to propagate anti-national sentiments and radicalising a particular section of society to create disaffection against the country, aggravating activities which are detrimental to the integrity, security and sovereignty of the country.

to create a reign of terror in the country, thereby endangering the security and public order of the state.

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Eminent Lawyer Dr Lalit Bhasin new IACC National President

FW DESK New Delhi

Dr Lalit Bhasin, Managing Partner, Bhasin & Co, Advocates, and an eminent lawyer with 60 years of standing in the legal profession is elected as the National President of Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC). A well-known name in business and social circles, Dr Bhasin, before being elected as the National President of the prestigious body unanimously, was the Executive Vice President of IACC. Dr. Bhasin is the 54th National President of IACC, which was set up in October 1968 and is headquartered in Mumbai, having 14 offices all over India, with a large membership from large, medium and small business entities.

«I am privileged to lead the IACC at a time when the Indo-US partnership is poised to leapfrog in many areas and directions thanks to the direction and support being given by the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden: IACC will draw strength from that rare bonding between our two countries to sharpen broad contours of engagements to take it to the next level,» says Dr Lalit Bhasin immediately after taking over the leadership of the 54-year old organization.

Dr Bhasin's association with IACC has been long, rich and trailblazing. Dr Bhasin gave a new direction and purpose to the bilateral body by creating new and innovative pathways for extended interactions with businesses of both countries. Dr Bhasin was instrumental in giving a new meaning and purpose to the Indo-US Economic Summit, the annual signature event of IACC, which has already completed 19 editions.



Arvind Kejriwal hosts sanitation worker from Ahmedabad over lunch

Yogi asks Ministers to be cautious while working



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in a first, has warned his Ministers not to indulge in any activity that brings bad name or disrepute to the government. He has warned them not to indulge in mediating in contracts and other works. At a meeting on Wednesday evening, he told the Ministers that they should treat this responsibility as an opportunity to serve people at large and directed them to remain in field and review their respective department's work at least for three to four days a week.

He urged them to carry out development work on PPP mode, as well as to innovate and think out of the box. The Chief Minister said that if they continued to do routine work, their departments will have no significant achievements to show and also asked them to come up with new ideas. According to official sources, Yogi asked each minister about the work assigned to them and also gave special directions to each of them. He also said that technology should be used as much as possible so that people need not come to government offices but can easily carry out their work through decentralised means.

For instance, he said that the Transport Department should start automatic driving institutes and online issuance of licences. Yogi asked the concerned Minister to develop bus depots so that they have an 'airport-like feel'.

He also asked the AYUSH Minister that efforts should be made to set up wellness centres in at least each of the 18 divisions, adding that people head to places like Bengaluru for wellness retreats and this facility should instead be developed in Uttar Pradesh.



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday welcomed a sanitation worker from Gujarat, Harsh Solanki and his family members to his Delhi residence for lunch.

Kejriwal had invited Solanki to Delhi during his townhall with sanitation workers in Gujarat recently. In a meeting with the Dalit community in Ahmedabad on Sunday, Solanki first invited Kejriwal to have dinner at his house.

In response, CM Kejriwal had said: "I will definitely come to your home. But before that, I have a suggestion. Will you accept?"

When Solanki agreed, Kejriwal said: "I have that seen ahead of elections, all leaders go to the home of Dalits and have food. But to date, no

leader has invited a Dalit to his home. So, will you come to my home for a meal?" Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Gujarat president Gopal Italia accompanied his family to Delhi on Monday.

AAP leaders received Solanki at the airport and escorted him to Kejriwal's place for lunch. Raghav Chadha,

AAP's Gujarat co-in charge, also received Solanki and his family at the airport. On this occasion, Harsh Solanki gifted him Babasaheb's picture.

After having lunch, CM Kejriwal said: "I had the honour of hosting Harsh Solanki and his family, our guests from Gujarat; our families had lunch

together at my residence. We don't have time for petty politics, we work for the public, that's why the public likes us.

"The people first made our government in Delhi, then in Punjab and now people of Gujarat are saying that AAP's government is going to be formed in Gujarat too."

Talking to the media on the recent developments in Rajasthan, Kejriwal said that "we don't know politics but work for the public, build schools and hospitals".

"We do politics of work. First, the government was formed in Delhi and then in Punjab. Now, people in Gujarat are saying that AAP government will be formed there too. "They (Congress) are not even able to control their own

Delhi Liquor Scam: CBI makes first arrest, nabs businessman Vijay Nair

NEW DELHI: In a latest development in the alleged excise policy scam in Delhi, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) made its first arrest on Tuesday by nabbing businessman Vijay Nair.



Sources told to media that Nair was arrested from Delhi and now the CBI will seek his custodial remand. Nair, the former CEO of Only Much Louder, an entertainment and event management firm, and one of the prime suspects in the liquor scam, had gone to London. He returned to join

the probe and was placed under arrest. The CBI has alleged that Nair was actively involved in the irregularities in framing and implementing the excise policy for the year 2021-22.

Nair was reportedly a volunteer of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and allegedly helped

party, both the parties do manipulations. They keep saying that Kejriwal should stop giv-

ing freebies. Today, the hope of the entire country is from the Aam Aadmi Party. I don't

understand the alternative, we have to take the country forward," said Kejriwal.

There are allegations that Arun Ramchandra Pillai, a resident of Kokapet in Hyderabad, used to collect undue pecuniary advantages from Mahendru for onward transmission of money to accused public servants through Nair.

On behalf of Nair, Sameer Mahendru, Director of Indospirits, allegedly paid around Rs 2-4 crore to Arjun Pandey, an associate of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

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'Operation Bulldozer' intensifies, Police nabbed Nigerian drug supplier

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

CIA Staff Ambala police arrested a Nigerian wholesale drugs supplier identified as Martin used to supply drugs in bulk in the area contacting customers through network on WhatsApp, CIA Staff Ambala police arrested Martin during a raid at Delhi two days ago and brought him to Ambala. Martin was produced in the court at Ambala on September 29 and remanded to police custody for four days. Ambala police reached up to Nigerian drugs supplier through a youth Deepak arrested by Ambala police along with another companion on October 18, 2022 carrying heroine during search operation on the national highway near Shastri Colony Ambala Cantt when he disclosed the identity of drug supplier Martin. Inspector Virender during raid arrested the accused.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's 'Operation Bulldozer' introduced in the state bringing good results when most of the drug suppliers playing with the life of innocent

people including youths in the state are now thinking to migrate from Haryana state to neighboring states. Apart from demolishing the properties of drug smugglers and hard core criminals in Haryana state government has now decided to attach their properties in order to wipe them out of state completely.

In past couple of days Haryana state government accompanied by police force has demolished 25 constructions in a complex at fish market in sector 22 Faridabad spread in 2.5 acre



area which was encroached by a criminal family led by Virender alias Lala against whom 32 criminal cases including murder, drugs and illicit liquor smuggling were registered by the police at different police stations who died last year and the entire business was being presently controlled by deceased's family. Police demolished all 25 structures illegally constructed over land originally belonging to government which included three residential buildings, nearly 18 shops, three godowns and an office.

The main object for holding a press conference at Ambala by Naveen Jaihind Aam Admi Party (AAP) Convener in Haryana was to strongly condemn ruling Manohar government in the state. Addressing media persons Jaihind said that nearly five lakh pensioners which include retired government old-age employees, widows and handicapped persons are facing inconvenience in getting their pension since some of them find discontinued without reason by Haryana state government. Jaihind said, pension of 102 years old Dada Dulichand was discontinued all of sudden with no reason. He said, however state government has released a helpline number to help those suffer in this regard and settle all disputes related to pensions.

Properties of 89 gangsters, drug smugglers in 11 Haryana districts to be demolished

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

Narcotic department along with state police department in Haryana has prepared a detail of gangsters, drug smugglers and anti-social elements all over in the state it has decided to wipe them out of the state and decision taken to demolish their residential as well as commercial buildings. On the directions by chief minister, district as well as police department in the state has already started demolishing operation in this regard all over in the state since most of the structures have been found constructed at illegal places either on government or encroached land or built by anti-social elements. According to information, large number of illegal buildings has already been demolished in recent past on war footing basis.

Among those include in the list

of 89 persons include large number of drug smugglers including few females involved in this illicit business as well as anti-social elements and decision has already been taken to demolish their residential as well as commercial buildings at an early which include 20 persons at Rohtak, 18 persons at Hisar, 11 persons at Fatehabad, 8 persons at Jind, 8 persons at Sirsa, 7 persons each at Kurukshetra and Jhajjar,

5 persons at Ambala, 3 persons each at Karnal and Kaithal and one persons at Yamunanagar.

Recently, illegal residential buildings of drug smugglers and antisocial elements have been demolished jointly by police and municipal offices at Rohtak, Hisar, Karnal and Ambala Cantt which were built illegally without giving a notices and similar action awaited in large number of towns for which

a list has already been prepared. Sources reveal a sword is hanging over as many as 20 persons allegedly involved in illicit activities only a Rohtak and preparations are being made to demolish their residential buildings with bulldozers any time without serving notice since all these structures have been built illegally.

There are eight criminals having residential structures involved in cases on the radar of Narcotic Bureau as well as police at Jhajjar which may be demolished or attached by the government, five buildings are likely to be demolished at Ambala, eight building are likely to be demolished at Jind, government is trying for the arrest of a criminal at Jhajjar for which Haryana state government has announced Rs 5 lakh award for his arrest and state government has already sealed his petrol pump.

SHIMLA: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur was on Thursday presented a cheque for Rs 10 lakh from The Dalai Lama Trust towards the Chief Minister Relief Fund.

Wangyal Lama for Chief Representative Office presented the cheque to the Chief Minister.

Thakur thanked the Dalai Lama for this noble gesture and said such contributions go a long way in helping the needy people at the time of distress.

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The Amritsar police have nabbed the key accused Yuvraj Sabharwal resident of Gali Ghumiara vali, Navi Abadi Faizpura, Amritsar from Kullu, Himachal Pradesh who had planted IED under the Bolero Car of Punjab Police Sub Inspector Dilbagh Singh in the posh Ranjit Avenue Locality.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Mukhwinder Singh Bhullar, said that the arrested accused Yuvraj Sabharwal was the main kingpin of this case, who executed the operation on directions of Lakhbir @ Landa.

Police said that two pistols, five cartridges, one detonator, some packaging material, remains of explosive substance were seized from Yuvraj Sabharwal during the course of investigation after his arrest. On the intervening night of

Pension of nearly 175000 pensioners discontinued in Haryana: AAP

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

The main object for holding a press conference at Ambala by Naveen Jaihind Aam Admi Party (AAP) Convener in Haryana was to strongly condemn ruling Manohar government in the state. Addressing media persons Jaihind said that nearly five lakh pensioners which include retired government old-age employees, widows and handicapped persons are facing inconvenience in getting their pension since some of them find discontinued without reason by Haryana state government. Jaihind said, pension of 102 years old Dada Dulichand was discontinued all of sudden with no reason. He said, however state government has released a helpline number to help those suffer in this regard and settle all disputes related to pensions.

Jaihind said, pension of nearly 175000 pensioners have been discontinued in Haryana state due to technical, political and family ID error or any other reason. He disclosed that out of total number of 1,04,691 pensioners whose disbursement of pension amount was discontinued in the state during investigation confirmed that 14,691 persons had already died but falsely getting pension amount. Investigation also revealed that the husbands of nearly 18000 women declared widows in the state were found alive and such women were falsely availing the facility of widow pensioners since a long time.

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Haryana CM orders special 'girdawari' to assess crop loss



CHANDIGARH: Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday asked the farmers not to worry about compensation for their crops, mainly the paddy, damaged due to the adverse weather conditions as directions have been issued for a special girdawari (inspection).

Farmers will be given complete compensation for the loss of their crop, he said. The Chief Minister told the media that the strike of arhtiyas or commission agents has been called off and some of their demands have been accepted. Besides, the government has written a letter to the Central government regarding their demands like increasing their commission, he added.

Standing paddy crop in hundreds of acres in Haryana has been damaged due to untimely rains last week, revenue and agriculture officials said on Tuesday. Agriculture Department officials said the losses could run into hundreds of crores, though the exact damage would be known only after assessment by revenue officials across the state. There were also reports of damage to the paddy crop in Punjab, another prominent granary. The Opposition said the damage was widespread in Ropar, Jalandhar, Patiala, Kapurthala, and Bhatinda areas and sought compensation for the affected farmers within a stipulated time.

Highlighting the plight of farmers, Congress leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda had demanded compensation for farmers as huge paddy crops across the state have been damaged owing to untimely rain. He also sought a girdawari (harvest inspection) for assessment of crop damage in the past two days.

Among those include in the list

Third front merely a bundle of extinguished candles: Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

The proposal to form a powerful third front in the country in order to face BJP ruling government in the country as well as in most of the states at present recently had a gathering to finalize the same at Fatehabad in Haryana on the eve of birth anniversary of former Deputy Prime Minister Tau Devi Lal by former Haryana chief minister Om Parkash Chautala organized 'Samman Divas' rally inviting leaders of different political parties in opposition in the country. Like in past, no action could be taken by all present leaders as regard formation of a third front in the country except all those present spoke against ruling BJP government in the country as well as in majority of states.

Talking to media persons here Haryana Home cum Health Minister Anil Vij said that all those political leaders present in 'Samman Divas' rally gathered at Fatehabad to discuss formation of a third front to fight BJP in coming polls were similar to a bundle of extinguished candles having no political impact over voters in the country, although they might have played active

games in their past lives. Vij said, people are extremely satisfied with the performance and policies of ruling BJP government in the country as well as in majority of states.

While pointing at the allegations made by former Congress chief minister in Haryana Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Vij said usually political leaders of parties in opposition speak against ruling government in our country but the performance of a political party can only be evaluated by the people and recent municipal polls held in Haryana state sometime ago in which Congress failed to perform well and could not be declared winners by voters in the state and voters stamped in favor of BJP candidates in maximum number of seats in these elections.

Pointing at recent tug and war for power going on in Rajasthan Vij said that Ashok Gehlot has remained unsuccessful to control only Rajasthan state, how he will be able to control entire country,



raising a question Vij said though it is an internal matter related to Congress party but it clearly shows that Congress lacks democracy in party, wants to impose things on others lacking system in their party by having secret voting even to select their party leader or president. Talking to media persons Vij said, 'Bharat Jodo' rally being organized by Congress at present is merely a eye wash, whereas it will break country since breaking country is in Congress DNA.

Vij said, it is only due to Congress that countless innocent people in the country were killed during partition in the country and we cannot forget how more than 3500 persons belonging to Sikhs community were brutally killed in the country during Sikh riots in 1984 only due to Congress. Vij said that leaders of opposition in Haryana Vidhan Sabha had imposed several false allegations on ruling BJP government in Haryana which included that nearly 5000 educational schools in Haryana state has been closed down by the government in the state, but Hooda should at least tell the names of these schools since he is in the habit of making false allegations and lies.

There are eight criminals having residential structures involved in cases on the radar of Narcotic Bureau as well as police at Jhajjar which may be demolished or attached by the government, five buildings are likely to be demolished at Ambala, eight building are likely to be demolished at Jind, government is trying for the arrest of a criminal at Jhajjar for which Haryana state government has announced Rs 5 lakh award for his arrest and state government has already sealed his petrol pump.

Yamuna water level receding but still above danger mark

The water level in Yamuna in Delhi has receded slightly but it is still above the danger mark of 205.33 metres and the affected people will have to wait for a few more days before they can return to their houses in low-lying areas along the river, officials said on Thursday.

According to the Central Water Commission's data, the water level in the Yamuna dipped from 206.59 metres at 7 am on Wednesday, the highest since August 2019, to 205.37 metres at 9 am on Thursday. It is likely to drop below the danger mark of 205.33 metres during the day.

The city administration had issued a flood alert, suspended rail traffic movement on the Old Yamuna Bridge and evacuated around 6,500 people from low-lying areas close to the Yamuna on Tuesday as the river breached the evacuation mark of 206 metres following a late spell of heavy rain in the upper catchment areas, especially Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, last week.



Since there has been no significant rainfall in the upper catchment areas over the last three days, the water flow rate from Haryana's Hathnikund Barrage has also come down from 96,000 cusecs at 7 am on Tuesday to 25,400 cusecs at 9 am on Wednesday and further to 17,800 cusecs at 9 am on Thursday.

One cusec is equivalent to 28.32 litres per second.

Normally, the flow rate at the Hathnikund barrage is 352 cusecs, but the discharge increases after heavy rainfall in the catchment areas.

The water discharged from the barrage normally takes two to three days to reach the national capital.

Officials said civil defence workers deployed in the affected low-lying areas are asking people not to move back

to their houses till the water recedes to the normal level.

The low-lying areas near the river in Delhi are considered vulnerable to flooding and are home to around 37,000 people.

Most of the people shifted to safer places themselves. The Delhi administration had to evacuate around 6,500 people and move them to community centres, schools and temporary tents, an official said.

"We expect the water to recede to normal levels in two to three days. Thereafter, these people can go back to their places," he said.

Though the land along the Yamuna belongs to the Delhi Development Authority, Revenue Department and private individuals, encroachments have come up on a large part of the river floodplains over the years.

Normally, flooding in the Yamuna is reported in July or August which receive maximum rainfall during the monsoon season.

Replay of Chandigarh, video leak in Kanpur, one held



KANPUR: In a frightening replay of the Chandigarh incident, a sanitary worker has been caught red handed making video of girls in a private girls' hostel in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur.

The incident took place in a hostel located here in Tulsi Nagar area where medical aspirants are staying. The accused allegedly made videos of girls in the bathroom. The girl students filed a police complaint following which the man was arrested. As per the complaint, the hostel staffer made several obscene videos of the girls in the hostel. On Thursday, one of the girls saw the staff secretly filming and snatched his phone. The girl reportedly saw there were several such videos and approached the nearest police station to register a complaint. The hostel is owned by a police officer who is posted as Additional SP in one of the districts in Uttar Pradesh and students from different districts are living in the hostel and preparing for

Mallikarjun Kharge, a Gandhi family loyalist poised to be 2nd Congress president from Karnataka



In 1969, he joined the Indian National Congress and went on to become president of the Gulbarga City Congress Committee. That Kharge was unconquerable at the hustings was mirrored until 2014 Lok Sabha polls in which he bucked the Narendra Modi wave that swept Karnataka, particularly Hyderabad-Karnataka region, and had won from Gulbarga with a margin of over 74,000 votes. He has won from Gurnitkal Assembly constituency nine times in a row before he plunged into the Lok Sabha poll arena in 2009 and has been a two-time MP from Gulbarga parliamentary segment. However, in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls the veteran leader was defeated by BJP's Umesh Jadhav in Gulbarga by a margin of 95,452 votes. That was the first electoral loss in Kharge's political life spanning several decades.

Popularly known as "Solilada Saradara" (a leader without defeat) in his home-State of Karnataka Mapanna Mallikarjun Kharge, who on Friday filed nomination for the Congress' presidential polls, is a hardcore loyalist of the Gandhi family. If elected, he will be the second AICC president from Karnataka after S Nijalingappa, and also a Dalit leader to hold the post after Jagjivan Ram. A leader with more than 50 years of experience in politics, 80-year-old Kharge, who was elected MLA for nine times in a row, has seen a steady rise in his career graph from humble beginnings as a union leader in his home-district of Gulbarga, now Kalaburagi.

Congress intensifies its 'PayCM' campaign against BJP govt in Karnataka



ARUNKUMAR RAO, Bengaluru

Karnataka Congress Leaders intensified its 'PayCM' campaign against Karnataka BJP government and its Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. Congress functionaries including opposition leader Siddaramaiah and BK Hariprasada and state president D K Shivakumar and AICC general secretary Ran-deep Singh Surjewala along with

Legislators and workers posted the posters on compound walls at racecourse road and other places in Bengaluru. However, police quickly ripped off posters and took some of functionaries and workers into preventive custody and later let off after some hours. Poster contains CM Basavaraj Bommai face along with QR code by the word 'PayCM' written on them - a campaign launched by the congress party against the BJP government in Karnataka. The PayCM QR code bearing the photograph of the chief minister gets directed to website -40% Sarkara-accusing the bommai-led bjp government was charging 40 percent commission on public works. The website was lunched by Congress few days ago. Posters were also seen on several Vehicles, especially autorickshaws but these did not have the image of the CM Bommai or the 'PayCM' caption although it had the QR code along with slogans like 'raise voice against corruption' along with the phone number to record complaint against the government. Responding to the allegation CM Bommai lashed at the congress party, calling the entire campaign stunt a "politically motivated evil design" refuting the corruption allegations by congress leaders bommai said that none of their claims are true.

Four more held for PFI links in MP, state home minister says ban on group 'internal surgical strike'



Four more persons have been arrested by the Madhya Pradesh police for their links with the Popular Front of India, taking the number to 25, state Home Minister Narottam Mishra said on Wednesday as he welcomed the ban on the group by the Centre terming it as an "internal surgical strike". According to sources in the police, 25 persons were arrested in the last three days, including 21 from eight districts of the state on Tuesday. Mishra said the banned organisation was involved in anti-national activities and had links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Four more persons were arrested for PFI links. So far, 25 people, including 21 on Tuesday, have been arrested (by MP Police). The action against PFI's sleeper cells will continue in the state based on the interrogation of the arrested persons, Mishra told reporters in Bhopal. Four PFI activists were arrested on September 22 in a multi-agency operation spearheaded by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from Madhya Pradesh. The crackdown by MP Police came after the NIA action. Mishra said the PFI was also involved in killings and violence in several states. This (the ban on PFI) is a welcome step. The Centre's action against PFI is an internal surgical strike. The BJP government doesn't believe in the politics of appeasement, he said. The Central government on Wednesday banned PFI, alleged to be involved in several violent and terror incidents and having "links" with global terror groups like ISIS, along with its several associates for five years following the second round of crackdown against its leaders. A day before, more than 150 people allegedly linked with PFI were detained or arrested in raids across seven states, five days after a similar pan-India crackdown against the 16-year-old group led to the arrest of more than a hundred of its activities.

2 buses blasts in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur



Two blasts have hit passenger buses in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur. The second blast occurred at 10:45 pm on a bus at Domail chowk near a petrol pump. However, the blasts occurred in empty buses when they were parked. Still two people were injured. Other nearby vehicles were also damaged in the blast. The injured were shifted to Udhampur District Hospital. Security forces rushed to the spot soon after the incident. They have started the investigation. "The blast occurred around 10:30 pm. Two people have been injured in the incident and vehicles parked nearby have also suffered damage," said Suleman Choudhary, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range. "The reason for the blast is still not known. We are investigating the matter."

Stone pelting is history now: Jammu and Kashmir DGP

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbagh Singh has said that the stone pelting in Kashmir is history now. He said the wiping out of the separatist elements like Hurriyat and Jamaat-i-Islami had contributed to peace in the Valley. "Stone-pelting in Kashmir was promoted by elements who worked at the behest of Pakistani agencies. Elements like Hurriyat and Jamaat-i-Islami were responsible for this," the DGP Singh told media in Srinagar on Friday.

President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Syed Sadatullah Husaini opposes the ban on Popular Front of India

In a statement to the media, the JIH President said: «Jamaat-e-Islami Hind expresses disagreement over the government's decision to ban the Popular Front of India (PFI) and its affiliates. Banning an organisation is neither a solution nor does it suit a democratic society. The culture of banning the organisations is in itself a clear violation of the fundamental rights protected by the Constitution and goes against the democratic spirit and basic civil liberties. People may have differences with these organisations, their policies and the rhetoric. We have also always opposed them



where those individuals will also have a chance to prove their innocence. However, to ban an entire organization on flimsy and unsubstantiated grounds, is unjustified and undemocratic. Recently, we have witnessed many fringe and radical groups openly indulging in hate-mongering and calling for violence. These groups are operating with impunity and no action is being taken against them whatsoever. Hence, the ban appears selective, discriminatory, and biased. It will increase the trust deficit between people and the government and send a wrong message to the country. We demand that the ban be revoked at the earliest."

THE ACTION AGAINST PFI'S SLEEPER CELLS WILL CONTINUE IN THE STATE BASED ON THE INTERROGATION OF THE ARRESTED PERSONS

continue in the state based on the interrogation of the arrested persons, Mishra told reporters in Bhopal. Four PFI activists were arrested on September 22 in a multi-agency operation spearheaded by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from Madhya Pradesh. The crackdown by MP Police came after the NIA action. Mishra said the PFI was also involved in killings and violence in several states. This (the ban on PFI) is a welcome step. The Centre's action against PFI is an internal surgical strike. The BJP government doesn't believe in the politics of appeasement, he said. The Central government on Wednesday banned PFI, alleged to be involved in several violent and terror incidents and having "links" with global terror groups like ISIS, along with its several associates for five years following the second round of crackdown against its leaders. A day before, more than 150 people allegedly linked with PFI were detained or arrested in raids across seven states, five days after a similar pan-India crackdown against the 16-year-old group led to the arrest of more than a hundred of its activities.

Govt continuously looking at ease of doing business & decriminalization of tax laws as a priority: Vivek Aggarwal

Having a perfect system of taxation would continue to be a work in progress. In any case, we can identify ways to develop and work towards implementing a system that is more transparent, less subjective in implementation & administration, so as to promote ease of doing business leading to growth and development of the country's economy. We have seen a robust growth in collection of direct as well as indirect taxes and the government is looking at enhancing ease of doing business and decriminalization of tax laws as a priority. Vivek Aggarwal, Additional Secretary, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance said. Speaking at an event organised by industry body ASSOCHAM, Vivek Aggarwal further said, "Important issues like simplification of the compoundable criminal provisions in the Income Tax Act, Customs Act and in the GST Act and Threshold limit for criminalization and prosecution of tax evasion is something that needs to be relooked at."

Why govt control over only Hindu temples?: Shankaracharya

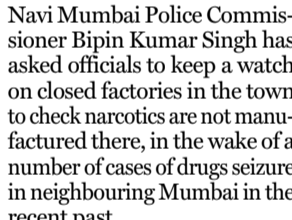
While addressing media persons Shankaracharya Swami Nityanand, strongly condemned government's control over Hindu temples and 'Maths' as well as their income collected towards donations received in these religious places being misused, which according to him is unjustified as condition of most of these religious places and their economic condition is turning bad to worst and at times even these religious places are unable to purchase material to perform prayers and distribute 'Perashad' to visitors. He said, voice is being raised since past over 13 months to free all Hindu religious temples immediately. Shankaracharya Swami told that the amount collected towards donations at famous Tirupati Bala temple is being misused and spent over religious organizations other than Hindu temples by political leaders allegedly by Chief Minister Y.S. Jaganmohan to attract voters which is disappointing. In reply to a media question



that when India would become a Hindu nation Shankaracharya Swami said that when we talk about Hindu nation do not speak of religion since there are nearly 204 countries and we talk about Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Communist population. Shankaracharya Swami said, ancient history reveals that ancestors of large number of communities including Hindu, Muslim and Christian were basically 'Sanatan Arya'. Information reveals, then Human Resources Minister Murlu Manohar Joshi had a plan to include Valmiki Ramayan, Ved Vyas, Mahabharat and study of Kautalya Philosophy in educational syllabus but Congress leader Arjun Singh indicating same as communalism dropped the idea to avoid controversy. Meanwhile, Shankaracharya Swami had written three religious journals: Neeti Chalisa, Neeti Savitri and Neeti Nidhi in order to provide religious education to young generation.

Keep an eye on closed factories to check drug menace: Navi Mumbai top cop tells officials

Navi Mumbai Police Commissioner Bipin Kumar Singh has asked officials to keep a watch on closed factories in the town to check narcotics as not manufactured there, in the wake of a number of cases of drugs seizure in neighbouring Mumbai in the recent past. During a meeting of the district-level narcotics committee on Wednesday, Singh said several containers arrive at



Uran and the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Navi Mumbai, and asked the Coast Guard to keep an eye on them to prevent any



movement of narcotics. Singh also directed the officials to check if narcotics were being manufactured at chemical factories in industrial zones in the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation limits. He said a large stock of banned drug MD was recently seized in Mumbai and officials should check if drugs were being manufactured in the chemical and pharmacy units in Navi Mumbai.

We will tackle all challenges and difficulties together: CDS Gen Anil Chauhan

Gen Anil Chauhan on Friday became India's new Chief of Defence Staff with a mandate to implement the ambitious theatisation plan that aims to ensure tri-services synergy and prepare the armed forces for future security challenges facing the nation. Gen Chauhan, a former Eastern Army Commander, took charge as the country's senior-most military commander over nine months after first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat died in a helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu. In a brief interaction with the media, Gen Chauhan said the security challenges facing the nation will be dealt with jointly by the three services.



to dedicate and lay foundation stones for projects worth thousands of crores. It also includes the dream city project of diamond sector, dedicated Sewerage Treatment plant besides others. He promised to start a train from Surat to Kashi with a cargo capacity upto one tonne which will help textile industries to transport textile cargos to East Uttar Pradesh. Currently, cargoes are transported through roads. During his two-day visit from Thursday, Modi is scheduled

Kerala HC dismisses PIL to regulate Bharat Jodo Yatra



The Kerala High Court on Tuesday dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) which sought a direction to the state government and the police to ensure the Congress party's ongoing 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' does not create traffic jams by taking over the entire road. A bench of Chief Justice S Manikumar and Justice Shaji P Chaly rejected the PIL after the Kerala government said

TRP scam spooks again: ED books 16 for money laundering, 'exonerates' Republic TV

Enforcement Directorate (ED) has virtually 'exonerated' Republic TV and R. Bharat - English and Hindi news channels owned by Arnab R. Goswami, but the agency has booked 16 others of various private television channels and a market research group, for alleged money-laundering charges in the sensational TRP scam that erupted two years ago. The ED charge sheet was filed on September 26 on behalf of Assistant Director Pawan Kumar before the Special PMLA Court Mumbai, and has sought initiation of proceedings, among others, to confiscate the provisionally attached properties of all the accused as stipulated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, as they were bought from the proceeds of the crime. The accused named are: Shirish V. Pattanshetty and Manish R. Sangh, both owners of 'Fakht Marathi' channel, their

company Lotus Enterprises, Narayan N. Sharma, owner of 'Box Cinema' channel and his company Box Cinemedia Pvt. Ltd., Vishwajeet O. Sharma and Darshan B. Singh, both the owners of 'Mahamovie' channel and their company Teleone Consumers Product Pvt. Ltd. The others are: Bompally Rao Mistry of Sanch Media, Umesh C. Mishra, Vishal V. Bhandari, Dinesh P. Vishwakarma, Vikas V. Burungale, Ashwin C. Motiwale, Mahesh S. Bompalli and



Rajesh K. Vishwakarma (all ex-employees of Hansa Research Group), as named in the charge sheet. The ED has urged the Special Court to take cognisance and issue process against all the accused individuals (for arrest), order the confiscation of their movable and immovable assets, seize their passports, etc. Presumably giving a 'clean chit' to Goswami and his news channels, the ED termed its investigations under PMLA as "at variance" with the probe ini-

tially conducted by the Mumbai Police, as "no such evidence is forthcoming" in the statements of the accused/witnesses, digital data evidence and analysis of the raw data provided by Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC). The ED said that the Mumbai Police -- which had first exposed the scam in 2020 -- relied on a forensic audit report of Acquisitory Risk Consulting Pvt. Ltd., that contended how the TRP calculation methodology was tinkered with and controls used to favour specific channels, was superficial and based on analysis of limited aspects. The Mumbai Police had named Republic TV, India Today and other channels as allegedly involved in the TRP scam that had shaken up the country's media industry and sparked a massive political uproar. In view of its findings, the ED charge sheet has not mentioned Republic TV, R. Bharat

channels, its Editor-in-Chief Goswami or his company ARG Outlier Media, or any BARC officials. However, the ED probe has detected instances of TRP manipulations not only in Mumbai and Maharashtra but also Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and has called for the FIRs filed by the respective state police for investigations. Another FIR was registered by the Uttar Pradesh Police, which has now been transferred and under probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Delhi. "From the investigations and evidence gathered, it is clearly established that the (16) accused committed the offence of money laundering... and are liable to be prosecuted and punished... and the provisionally attached properties involved in the money-laundering are liable to be confiscated... as per the PMLA, "the ED concluded.



Privacy must be a priority while regulating apps

The draft telecommunication Bill, put out last week for public comments, hints at a disturbing governmental pursuit, for more control over a range of digital applications and over-the-top streaming services that millions of Indians use daily. It seeks to do this by bringing them under the ambit of telecommunication services, the operation of which would require a licence — that is if the draft provisions do go through. This means the likes of WhatsApp, Zoom, and Netflix will be considered telecommunication services. And so would a whole range of digital services that are anyway regulated by the IT Act. This, the Government wants to do, by a wide expansion of the definition of what constitutes a telecom service. The new definition includes everything from broadcasting services to electronic mail, from voice mail to voice, video and data communication services, from Internet and broadband services to over-the-top communication services, including those that the Government may notify separately. It is all well to state, as the Government has done, that the country requires a new legal framework, and not the existing one that is based on the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, to deal with the realities of the 21st century. But, it is not just technology that has evolved in over a century but also a democratic society's understanding and expectations of user rights, privacy and transparency. Even as one shouldn't underplay the mounting challenges for ensuring security, the repeated attempts by the Government to be able to tap into all kinds of communication, without making sure the common man has a legal armor in the form of a data protection law, is extremely problematic. The Government needs to upgrade its thinking on users and privacy. This draft needs to go back to the drawing board.

LETTERBOX

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It always seems impossible until it's done.
— Nelson Mandela

THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. DELENG/2011/38860

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA
ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA

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

PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA
OWNER : FW MEDIA

PUBLISHED AT: BUILDING NO-23, NEHRU PLACE
NEW DELHI 110019; PHONE: 9888040061

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



INDIA SLIPS A RANK IN UNITED NATION HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2021-22

UN: Human Development Index 2021-22 and India

The Human Development Report 2021-22, brought out by the United Nations Development Programme, shows that India's global rankings have slipped from 130 in 2020 to 132 in 2021 in line with a global fall in HDI scores in the wake of the pandemic Covid-19. At 73 and with an index value of 0.782, Sri Lanka emerged as the best performer in the Indian sub-continent. The island nation was followed by China (79 and 0.768), Bhutan (127 and 0.666), Bangladesh (129 and 0.661), India, Nepal (143 and 0.602) and Pakistan (161 and 0.544).

India's HDI value stood at 0.633 in 2021, which was lower than the world average of 0.732. In 2020, too, India recorded a decline in its HDI value (0.642) in comparison to the pre-Covid level of 2019 (0.645). This is not surprising as the growth in India's Human Development Index (HDI) values have decelerated faster than the global values during the pandemic. India's HDI values, which were stagnant in 2019, fell marginally in 2020—the first year of the pandemic—and the fall accelerated almost threefold to -1.4% in 2021. However, at the global level, the fall in HDI indicators was curtailed in 2021 at 0.4%, which is marginally lower than in 2020. This sharp deterioration in India's HDI values by implication tends to have a declining impact on that of both South Asia and medium HDI countries, which include India. The regional numbers show that the highest decline in HDI values in 2021 was in South Asia (0.9%) primarily on account of India's poor performance. Among India's neighboring countries, Sri Lanka (73), China (79), Bangladesh (129) and Bhutan (127) have fared better than India. Only Pakistan



(161), Myanmar (149) and Nepal (143) were worse off.

The highest improvement in HDI values was in Europe and Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, where it registered some marginal growth. However, while the HDI values in the Arab countries remained stagnant, they continued to fall in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The World Inequality Report 2022 says the world's most extreme inequality has been observed in India. It notes India is a "poor country and very unequal, with an affluent elite". The WIR says the top 10 per cent of the country's population account for 57 per cent of the national income, of which 22 per cent is held by the top 1 per cent. While a small section of India's populace enjoys

5-star privileges, for the bottom 50 per cent sustainability of life is still a challenge. This is due to a variety of factors, including but not limited to, loss of job opportunities, an erratic unorganised sector, and rising poverty and inflation. The bottom 50 per cent are earning Rs 53160 and the top ten per cent Rs 1166520, 20 times more.

The Gini (inequality in income distribution) coefficient points to increasing inequality in India. The coefficient in 2014 was 34.4 per cent (100 per cent indicates full inequality and 0 per cent full equality). The coefficient increased to 47.9 per cent in 2018. India is said to be next to Russia in the world in terms of inequality.

The report also suggests that stress, sadness, anger, and worry have increased

over the last decade, reaching record levels. The HDR cautions that "uncertainty, inequality and insecurity go hand in hand with polarization and lack of trust". It finds political volatility becoming reality. Developing countries are entering a divergent social, political and economic period with sharp downside risks for the most vulnerable and regression in gender equality. India's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) increased five times between \$443 in 2000 and \$2014 in 2019. This doesn't mean a uniform rise in income.

A rank loss on the UN Human Development Index is a grave indicator of India's overall social and economic performance that invites investment and global participation. India slipped to 132 from 131 last year, which was 130 in 2015. The UN Human Development Report (HDR) noted slippage in quality of life, attainments to basic schooling, healthcare, job losses, penury, and overall lack of opportunities during the Covid-19 pandemic in many countries.

Major features:

- Life expectancy: In 2021, India's life expectancy at birth was recorded at 67.2 years.
- Schooling: Expected years of schooling at 6.7 years, mean years of schooling at 6.7 years,
- Gross National Income: The gross national income per capita stood at USD 6,590.
- Gender Inequality Index: India has been ranked 122 on the Gender Inequality Index.

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



ANWAR SADAT EXPLAINS WHY RIPARIAN STATES MUST COMPLY WITH PROCEDURAL DUTIES PURSUANT TO 'NO HARM RULE'

In nature's warning signs, a nudge to riparian states

There has been an increase in the magnitude, the frequency and the intensity of floods in many parts of the world. As an example, nearly a third of Pakistan is experiencing devastation, with a spread of diseases and severe shortage of potable water after intense flooding. In June this year Assam experienced one of its worst floods in living memory which affected over 30 districts. In some districts in Assam and Bihar, flooding is a recurrent feature, and thus a major impediment in ensuring poverty alleviation and meeting Millennium Development Goals.

Flooding is still considered to be a natural phenomenon that cannot be entirely prevented. But it is compounded by the lack of transparency in the sharing of hydrological information and also information relating to activities (such as by one riparian state) that are transboundary in their effect (affecting other riparian states), thus serving as an obstacle in understanding the magnitude of flooding.

In accordance with customary international law, no state has to use its territory in a manner that causes harm to another state while using a shared natural resource; this amounts to saying that there is a binding obligation on all states not to release water to cause floods in another co-sharer of the river water. This obligation gives rise to other procedural norms that support the management of floods, which include notification of planned measures, the exchange of data and information, and also public participation.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in the Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay (Argentina vs Uruguay) case (2010), upheld that conducting a transboundary environmental impact assessment (TEIA) of a planned measure or projects on the shared water course is part of customary international law. In fact, the ICJ noted that the acting state must notify the affected party of the results of TEIA to



"enable the notified party to participate in the process of ensuring that the assessment is complete, so that it can then consider the plan and its effects with a full knowledge of the facts".

Closer home, there is the case of China being the upper riparian in the Brahmaputra, which spans India and Bangladesh, enjoying apparent leverage vis-à-vis lower riparian India. During the monsoon, flooding has been the recurrent feature in the last several decades in Assam. India faces other woes in the form of the construction of dams by China. China's excessive water release, as a "dam controller", in violation of customary international law has the potential to exacerbate flooding in Assam in future. India's main concern is that there is no comprehensive sub-basin or all basin-level mechanism to deal with water management of Brahmaputra. Neither India or China are party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International

Watercourses (UNWC) 1997 or the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes 1992 (Water Convention).

The UNWC contains a direct reference to floods, which covers harmful conditions and emergency situations. Article 27 of the Convention says: "Watercourse States shall, individually and, where appropriate, jointly, take all appropriate measures to prevent or mitigate conditions...that may be harmful to other watercourse States, whether resulting from natural causes or human conduct, such as floods or ice conditions, water-borne diseases, siltation, erosion, salt-water intrusion, drought or desertification."

In the absence of any mechanism, India relies on its memorandum of understanding (MoU) with China in 2013 with a view to sharing hydrological information during the flood season (June to September). The MoU does not allow India

access to urbanisation and deforestation activities on the Chinese side of the river basin. With the MoU in the background, India by becoming a party to either the UNWC and the Water Convention could lay the groundwork for a bilateral treaty on the Brahmaputra but subject to the reservation that it should not insist on the insertion of a dispute settlement mechanism provision.

Floods are also a recurrent problem in the Koshi and Gandak river basins that are shared by India and Nepal. The intensity and magnitude of flooding is rising because of heavy seasonal precipitation as well as glacial retreat due to global warming and human-induced stressors such as land use and land cover changes in the river basin area of Nepal (Terai) and Bihar. It is important that the two neighbours view the river basins as single entities, which will help in facilitating an integrated approach for improved basin and flood risk management. The India-Nepal Koshi agreement 1954 (revised in 1966) is aimed at reducing devastating flooding in the river basin. The treaty-based joint bodies have also tried to refine the early warning systems for flood forecasting. In contravention of procedural customary international law obligation, India considers data on transboundary rivers as classified information, which is one of the key challenges in developing cross-border flood warning systems. In light of the cataclysmic floods in Pakistan and the visible effects of climate change, it is important that all riparian states must comply with all the procedural duties pursuant to the no harm rule. They must also think of becoming a party to either the UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention.

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



BOOKS: REVIEW

'The Many Lives of Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna': Book tells life story of Carnatic music genius

A new book gives readers an in-depth account of the many lives lived by Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna — the internationally renowned Carnatic musician from the illustrious musical lineage of composer Saint Tyagaraja.

"The Many Lives of Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna", written by award-winning author Veejay Sai, is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI). It will be released on Monday.

Having made a stage debut at the age of seven, Balamuralikrishna was hailed as a child prodigy. From then till the time he passed away, at the age of 86 in 2016, he continued to be in the spotlight, not just for his extraordinary tal-

ent and versatility as a vocalist and multi-instrumentalist, but as a composer, playback singer and even, briefly, as a character actor.

"Here is a story of this musical genius. I say 'a' story and not 'the' story because lives like his can never be covered in one book. There is so much more to the man, his genius and his life. A man who could connect with anyone with a song. A man who could make you feel the highly complicated genre of music he was singing was easy," writes Sai in the book.

"Whoever encountered him had a memorable story to share. That was the effect he left on them. If it wasn't a personal meeting, it was his music that lingered on like an aftertaste," he added.

'Whoever encountered him had a memorable story to share. That was the effect he left on them. If it wasn't a personal meeting, it was his music that lingered on like an aftertaste'

Balamuralikrishna, who has the rare distinction of composing tunes with 72 Melakarta 'ragas', performed in over 25,000 concerts across the world. He has also invented 'talas' (a traditional rhythmic pattern in classical Indian music) such as 'Trimukhi', 'Panchamukhi', 'Saptamukhi' and 'Navamukhi', among others.

Sai's in-depth research into the late artist's life and work has led



The Many Lives of Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna
By Veejay Sai
Penguin Random House India
288 pages; Rs 599



him deep into unseen archival material and across the Carnatic musical landscape.

Fortified by interviews with his family members, disciples and peers, the book, according to the publishers, is a "definitive biography of the musical genius, which is not only a revealing account of the personal traits and facets of an unparalleled genius, but also a portrait of India's classical music world" — a place as much of beauty as of untrammelled egos.

Mangalampalli Balamuralikrishna, the internationally re-

nowned Carnatic vocalist, was a child prodigy and proficient at a number of musical instruments. He was a school dropout, a teenage poet and composer, a restless mind, a versatile musician, a polyglot, wordsmith, pioneer and an unparalleled musical genius, and this is the story of the many lives of the iconic maestro. With in-depth research into archival material, fortified by interviews with his family, disciples and peers, Veejay Sai's definitive biography of Balamuralikrishna traces his journey in the world of music, a place of beauty as well as egos.

Sai's previous book "Drama Queens: Women Who Created History on Stage" was released in 2017. The period between 1850 and 1950 was a magnificent time for the world of performing arts. Classical music, dance, drama and folklore traditions were being rewritten and reinterpreted to welcome a new age.

PM set to gift 5G services to Indians on October 1

The National Broadband Mission (NBM) under the Ministry of Communications tweeted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will officially roll out the 5G services in India on October 1 — the same day when the India Mobile Congress (IMC) kicks off which will heavily focus on 5G and related domains.

All the top telecom honchos — including Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani and Founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises Sunil Bharti Mittal — are scheduled to join the keynote address at the sixth edition of the IMC that will take place at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, from October 1-4.

“Taking India’s digital transformation & connectivity to new heights, Hon’ble PM, @narendramodi, will roll out



5G services in India; at India Mobile Congress; Asia’s largest technology exhibition, “read the screenshot of the tweet (now deleted from the NBM handle).

The event will see participation from telecom gear manufacturers and other industry stakeholders, in the presence of IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav.

According to sources, the government may showcase some successful 5G testbeds being

run in the country by Reliance Jio, Airtel and Vodafone Idea at the IMC 2022, jointly organised by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI).

During his Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, the Prime Minister had said that the 5G services will be launched in India soon.

Vaishnav last month said the government expects 5G services to be rolled out in the country by October 12, and the Centre will make sure that the prices are affordable for the consumers.

Vaishnav said that installations are being done and telecom operations are busy with the seamless rollout of 5G services. The government will ensure that the 5G plans remain affordable for the public, the minister said.

The 5G services would be rolled out in a phased manner and during the first phase, 13 cities are likely to get the 5G internet services.

The cities are Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Gandhinagar, Gurugram, Hyderabad, Jamnagar, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai and Pune.

Kerala Govt unveils new draft industrial policy

Government of Kerala unveiled its new industrial policy. The policy has special focus on upgrading skills of youth for jobs of the future, industries and technologies of the fourth industrial revolution, and aligning the industrial sector with the State’s vision of responsible and sustainable investments.

Presenting the draft industrial policy here, Minister for Industries, Law and Coir P. Rajeev said the new policy would aim to tap the strengths of the State and foster investments in sunrise sectors.

We will play to our strengths and see wherever we can utilise our production capabilities to manufacture in Kerala. We will focus on our core strengths and aim to promote employment generation, he told reporters.

The existing industrial policy was formulated in 2018. The Minister said the draft industrial policy would be shared with stakeholders within 10 days, and steps would be taken from industry bodies and others before



finalising the policy. The new industrial policy would be released in January 2023, and be effective from April 1, 2023, he said. The key pillars of the new policy include fostering entrepreneurship, enabling infrastructure, being ready for the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and upgrading skill sets of youth for futuristic jobs, an official statement said.

The draft policy envisages creating more employment, retaining the talent pool, ensuring balanced regional development and giving incentives for sustainable and responsible investments.

Some of the priority sectors identified in the draft industrial policy are artificial intelligence, space sector, ayurveda, biotechnology, designing, electronic system design & manufacturing, electric vehicles, engineering & research and development, food technology, and Graphene, it said.

Other areas identified for emphasis are hi-tech farming, high value-added rubber products, logistics, medical equipment, nano technology, renewable energy, retail, robotics, tourism & hospitality, 3D printing and marine cluster.

Competition Commission clears acquisition of Essar Group assets by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India



Competition Commission of India approved acquisition of assets of Essar Group by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Ltd.

The proposed combination involves the acquisition of power assets namely Essar Power Hazira Ltd and Gandhar Hazira Transmission Ltd, port assets like Hazira Cargo Terminals Ltd, Ibrox Aviation & Trading Private Ltd, Essar Bulk Terminal Ltd, Essar Bulk Terminal Paradip Ltd and Essar Vizag Terminals Ltd, as well as other assets.

JioPhone 5G price leak stirs controversy, research firm clarifies



Leading market research firm Counterpoint Research has refuted certain reports that used its findings to convey that Reliance Jio is set to launch the 5G version of its JioPhone Next affordable smartphone around Rs 8,000-Rs 12,000.

In a clarification posted on Twitter, Counterpoint said that “some comments from our research note dated 26th September 2022 on the JioPhone Next BoM have been taken out of context.” “This is leading to misquotes and misrepresentations of our intent. In our research, we speculate about the possible pricing of a 5G phone from Jio, but we have no specific knowledge of any possible or exact pricing plans for 5G products or the potential timing of any 5G products from Jio,” said the research agency.

Maruti Suzuki drives in Grand Vitara tagged between Rs 10.45 and 19.65 lakh

Looking to consolidate its presence in the fast-growing mid-sized sports utility segment, Maruti Suzuki India on Monday launched its all-new model Grand Vitara priced between Rs 10.45 lakh and Rs 19.65 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).

The model, which comes with a 1.5-litre petrol powertrain mated with strong and mild hybrid technology, will compete with the likes of Hyundai Creta, Kia Seltos and Tata Harrier, among others.

With Grand Vitara, the country’s largest car maker expects to enhance its presence in a segment where it currently lags behind the competition.

“The Grand Vitara paves the way toward a cleaner, greener, sustainable and carbon-neutral world. To ensure that we can do this, the Grand Vitara has been launched at a very competitive starting price of Rs 10.45 lakh,” MSI Managing Director



& CEO Hisashi Takeuchi said in a statement.

The model has received over 57,000 bookings so far, he added. The 1.5 litre trims with mild hybrid technology mated with a five-speed manual and six-speed automatic transmission options are priced between Rs 10.45 lakh to 17.05 lakh.

MSI claims a fuel efficiency of up to 21.1km per litre on the variants, which come with brake

energy regeneration, torque assist and idle stop-start function.

Grand Vitara Allgrip Select trim, which comes with Suzuki’s patented All Grip technology enabling it to take on all kinds of terrain, is tagged at Rs 16.89 lakh.

The trims with a strong hybrid powertrain, with a claimed fuel efficiency of 27.97 km per litre, are priced from Rs 17.99 lakh to Rs 19.65 lakh.

World Heart Day: Cardiac Surgeons call for lifestyle & dietary changes to have a good heart health

FW DESK New Delhi

To Commemorate “World Heart Day”, ASSOCHAM, an apex body, held a webinar titled “Dil Ki Baat” as part of the Illness to Wellness campaign. The webinar’s the paramount objective was to cascade awareness and disseminate knowledge about Heart Care symptoms and preventions to lead a healthier and strong cardiovascular health.

You might not give it much thought throughout the day, but your heart is working around the clock for you. Your heart is the most important muscle in your body because it pumps



blood and oxygen to all of your organs. In fact, there are certain foods can influence blood pressure, triglycerides, cholesterol levels and inflammation, all of which are risk factors for heart disease.

In his welcome address, Anil Rajput, Chairperson, ASSOCHAM CSR Council said “we

must pledge to protect one of the most important organs of the human body — the heart, and any sign of trouble in this organ should be taken seriously as it is a matter of life and death.”

Emphasising on the importance of maintaining good heart health, he said, “there is no shortcut to a healthy heart. By incorporating heart-healthy habits such as having a nutritious diet, regular physical activity and taking remedial measures through lifestyle changes, medication and regular check-ups are key for maintaining sound heart health and enjoying a healthy life for years to come.”

Flipkart’s service arm, Jeeves, offers end-to-end post-purchase solutions to businesses & customers



FW DESK New Delhi

Flipkart, India’s homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today announced the expansion of its service arm, Jeeves, that provides end-to-end post-purchase service solutions to consumers and businesses. It will cater to a wide range of categories of products including home appliances, mobiles, IT products, furniture, consumer electronics and more.

Jeeves today provides comprehensive post purchase solutions like installation, demo, repair, maintenance and VAS (Value-added service) including protection and extended warranties, inbound, outbound, and non-voice customer care services spanning across 40+ product categories. It has more than 300 walk-in service centers, 1,000+ on-site service partners, and 9,000+ trained service technicians to provide businesses of all sizes and consumers hassle-free post sale assistance. Keeping pace with the dynamic digital economy and retail landscape in India, Jeeves has transformed into a tech-enabled expert and trusted post-purchase service partner catering to the evolving needs of businesses and consumers across the country.

Air India halves discount on basic fares for senior citizens, students

MUMBAI: Tata Group-owned full-service carrier Air India has reduced by half the discount offered on basic fares for senior citizens and students in the economy class on its flights, according to its website.

The revised discount on basic fares is effective from September 29. Tata Group took control of the loss-making Air India from the government on January 27, this year. Senior citizens and students concession for tickets issued from 29th September 2022 will get 25% discount on

September 28, the airline said it has been decided to revise the concessionary fares with effect from 29th September 2022. The changes are applicable for tickets issued on/after 29th September 2022. According to the circular, the revised concession for senior citizens stands at <25% of basic fare>. The private airline, however, in a statement defended the

steep reduction in such concessionary fares, saying, <Even after this adjustment, the discount on basic fares for both students and senior citizens will be nearly double when compared to other private airlines.> <Considering the overall market situation and dynamics, we have decided to rationalise our fares in line with the broad industry trend.>, an Air India spokesperson added in the statement.

steep reduction in such concessionary fares, saying, <Even after this adjustment, the discount on basic fares for both students and senior citizens will be nearly double when compared to other private airlines.> <Considering the overall market situation and dynamics, we have decided to rationalise our fares in line with the broad industry trend.>, an Air India spokesperson added in the statement.

Takeda becomes a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact in India

FW DESK New Delhi

Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited, a global values-based, R&D-driven biopharmaceutical leader announced that its India operations has become a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the largest sustainability initiative globally.

As a signatory, Takeda has committed to adopting the Ten Principles of the UNGC which are derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

Ratnesh Kumar, Executive Director, UN-GCNI said, “The commitment to support UNGC Principles & Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has encouraged socially responsible



organizations to join the Global Compact initiative. We are delighted to welcome Takeda India into the GCN family and look forward to jointly pursuing goal-oriented initiatives towards the advancement of UN Global Compact’s mandates.”

Speaking on the announcement, Serina Fischer, General Manager for Takeda in India said, “Takeda is proud to have a values-based culture as its strong foundation. Our Global Code of Conduct is based on principles that are organized around Patient-Trust-Reputation-Business in that order. It embodies the spirit of Takeda — what we stand for and how we conduct ourselves.

North Indians in Singapore missing branded wheat flour



People from North India in Singapore are missing their soft chewy chapatis due to a shortage of branded atta even as Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has assured that wheat flour exports will resume soon.

Goyal, who made a transit stop-over in Singapore on his way home from the G20 meeting in Bali last Saturday, had assured the diaspora community that India would resume exports of wheat flour soon. The festive mood is however dampened as housewives are seeking chakkhi atta, wholemeal wheat flour originating from the Indian subcontinent, to make sweets and dishes for Navratri and Diwali celebrations. Atta shortage dampens the festive mood. We can’t live without Indian atta, cried the headlines in the Friday tabloid Table! I searched the minimarts and shops in my neighbourhood and elsewhere but there is absolutely no atta, the weekly quoted Nancy Bhargava as saying.

Quaker expands its portfolio with ready-to-eat breakfast cereals, launches ‘Quaker oats muesli’

FW DESK New Delhi

Wake up to the flavourful breakfast cereals options and gear up for the day. Quaker®, one of India’s leading brands in the oats segment, has entered the Ready-to-eat (RTE) cereal segment with a new delicious, innovative, and modern breakfast offering – Quaker Oats Muesli. Packed with the nutritious goodness of 5 grains and 22% fruit, nuts and seeds, Quaker Oats Muesli offers a crunchiness, multi-textural, and wholesome breakfast experience in two flavourful variants – Fruit & Nut and Berries & Seeds. Muesli is increasingly becoming a popular breakfast option and the easy-



to-make Quaker Oats Muesli is developed to provide ‘Fuel for the Real Fit’, first thing in the morning. A delightful combination of grains (oats, wheat, corn, barley, and rice) and inclusions such as fruits, nuts and seeds, the product gives a delicious taste experience with convenience and is a source of protein & fibre that gives a good start to the day.

Max Life study reveals only 1 in 3 Indians prioritize financial readiness for retirement

FW DESK New Delhi

Max Life Insurance Company Ltd. (“Max Life/“Company”), in partnership with KANTAR, launched the second edition of the ‘India Retirement Index Study’ (IRIS). The survey assesses urban India’s readiness to live a healthy, content, and financially independent retired life. Through

a self-administered digital study*, 3,220 respondents were surveyed across 28 cities comprising 6 metros, 12 Tier I and 10 Tier II cities.

While India’s life expectancy is consistently rising over the years, the survey reveals the underlying preparedness levels for retirement in the country over the last year. At 44, India’s Retirement Index (on a scale 0 to

100) reflects lag in urban India’s action on retirement planning in the one-year period.

Health and financial preparedness stood at 41 and 49 respectively, while emotional preparedness witnessed a significant dip from 62 to 59 indicating increasing dependency on family, friends, and social support during retirement.

Talking Points



Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav wants that by the year 2030, Indian Railways should be completely transformed into ‘green railways’. Similarly, the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board is planning a green rating system for hotels and resorts.

Efforts are going on around the world to protect the environment and minimize the effects of climate change. In this direction, the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board (HPSPCB) has been considering a proposal to give a green rating to the hotels and resorts in the hill state. This rating will be given on the basis of environment-friendly measures taken by the hotels to reduce pollution. Generally, hotels are rated in three and five-star categories according to the facilities provided to the guests, but it will be perhaps for the first time in the country that the green rating will be

A green movement to protect the planet

world’s air travelers want less air pollution from flights and they are willing to pay a little more for this measure.

Management consulting firm McKinsey & Company conducted a survey in 13 countries in which most air travelers expressed concern about air pollution caused by airplanes. About 5,500 people were consulted in the survey, of which 40 percent agreed to pay 2 percent additional money if the carbon emissions are reduced. In Spain, 60 percent of air passengers expressed their desire to opt for carbon-neutral flights. Not only aircraft, but some trains also add to the air pollution, primarily diesel engine driven trains. In India, 37 percent of trains are still dependent on diesel engines. They cause a lot of pollution, and to reduce this the railway is working towards using biodiesel in the fossil fuel-based engines. The Ministry of Railways plans to completely electrify the railways by the



year 2023, that is, the above 37 percent diesel locomotives should also be replaced by electric locomotives. Diesel engines of freight trains may need a little longer time.

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav wants that by the year 2030, Indian Railways should be completely transformed into ‘green railways’. Railways set up a solar power plant in Bina, Madhya Pradesh in February this year to generate the power it needs. Similarly, wind power plants are being planned in Rajast-

han, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat. There is a plan to illuminate railway buildings and premises with LED bulbs for lighting, so as to save electricity and contribute towards environmental protection. The trend of electric vehicles has already begun, which will help in controlling pollution. Japanese companies like Honda have been the world leaders in automobiles, but over the years they have been facing stiff competition from automakers in the US and Europe, especially from companies like

Tesla. Sales of electric vehicles (EVs), especially battery-operated cars, increased in the US, Europe, China, and around the world last year. Booking of EV cars is happening so fast that companies have even started taking full amounts in advance from the buyers.

The world came to a standstill position following the Covid pandemic, which was impacted further by the Russian action on Ukraine. But humanity faces a greater threat from climate change. Wars and military actions only exacerbate climate change. For example, due to the presence of the Indian Army on the high glaciers of the Himalayas on the Pakistan border, the snow keeps melting, which disturbs the environmental balance in the Himalayan region. The UN panel report on climate change says that the emission of greenhouse gases has increased by 14%. Developed countries have a big role in deteriorat-

ing the situation, whose anti-environmental activities have threatened life on half the earth.

The continuous emission of greenhouse gases puts a question mark on the future of plants, animals, and humans. The existence of all the flora and fauna on earth is dependent on each other. This interdependence is called an ecosystem. The balance of the ecosystem deteriorates due to the increase in the number of greenhouse gases. For example, due to the excessive use of pesticides in agriculture, 75% of the world’s insect moths have been destroyed, which are food for birds. Due to the elimination of insects, birds are not able to get food, due to which their population is rapidly declining. Similarly, the extinction of ponds and natural water bodies is killing the species of small animals like frogs and tortoises among others. The existence of snakes is in danger in the absence of frogs. Losing any one organism

in an ecosystem means that other species that depend on it will die. Due to this imbalance in nature, the life of humans is also in danger.

Since the world is passing through a major crisis; our daily life is also getting affected. For example, cooking oil prices have gone up in the wake of war, but prices are expected to remain stable in the coming days. The production of oilseeds is expected to be good in the country this year, hence the supply of mustard oil and soybean oil is expected to be satisfactory in the approaching months. According to the news being received from the agriculture sector, the production of mustard in the country is expected to increase by 40 lakh tonnes, due to which the supply of mustard oil will increase by 15 lakh tonnes. Soybean production has also improved. India consumes about 18 lakh tonnes of cooking oil every month.

Reserve Bank of India increases repo rate by 50 basis points

Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased the repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.90 on Friday. The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, heading the MPC, announced the hike to subdue the inflation. According to him there may be price pressure on wheat, rice and pulses due to lower sown acreage. The vegetable prices may also go up. The inflation is pegged at 6.7%. Das said the gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 13.5% year-on-year (YoY) in the first half. The real GDP is projected at 7%. The economic activity is resilient and investment is picking. The bank credit has increased. The capacity utilization in the manufacturing sector has increased while merchandise exports are facing some headwinds.



Merchandise exports are facing some headwinds.

RBI governor says world economy in the eye of a new storm and no one is insulated from it

The world is in the eye of a new storm but the domestic economy is resilient, is how governor Shaktikanta Das opened his post-policy presser this afternoon, listing the third shock facing the global economy after the pandemic and Ukraine war.

Earlier in the day, the RBI-led monetary policy committee delivered the third straight 50-bps repo rate hike, taking the over-

all increase in the federal fund rates by 190 bps to 5.90 per cent - the highest since April 2019 and going by all indications, they aren't done yet as inflation remains much above its tolerance level for the eighth month on the trot. Yet, earlier in the day, the MPC-RBI lowered the growth forecast for the second time to 7% down from 7.8% in April and 7.2% in August.

Rate hike by RBI to result in sustainable growth: ASSOCHAM

New Delhi: Describing the 50 basis points increase in the REPO rate a decision on the expected lines, ASSOCHAM said it goes to the credit of the RBI for anchoring the country's monetary policy in a manner that ensures financial stability and maintains optimism about India's inherent strength, braving a world full of financial turmoil, fear of recession and unabated inflationary outlook.



Sumant Sinha, Chairman, ASSOCHAM and CEO, Re-New Power. "The RBI's decision to raise the repo rate by 50 bps to a 3-year-high shows its acute sensitivity to continued high retail inflation impacting households. It is the right measured move to tame prices and stem the continued rupee depreciation. India's robustly growing economy will absorb this hike with marginal impact on business activities, if at all. The RBI's reduction in its GDP forecast to 7% from 7.2% is not surprising given global turbulence, including continuing high energy costs, the Ukraine conflict, broader inflationary trends, edgy markets and fluctuation in currencies worldwide. India still remains the world's fastest-growing major economy and the RBI continues to cushion this strong expansion well, despite significant global challenges."

The ASSOCHAM Secretary General Deepak Sood said, "Even as global headwinds persist, India is much better poised than its peers amongst the Emerging Market pack, both in terms of demand pickup as also supply augmentation. Demand improvement and supply augmentation are the twin positives that would ensure a sustainable growth of seven per cent, as spelt out by the RBI Governor Mr Shaktikanta Das. The RBI is using the best of the monetary tools to anchor adequate liquidity while calibrating inflationary pressures". The two measures are visible across agriculture, services and industry, more so ahead of the festive season. The ASSOCHAM said while the increase by 50 bps to 5.90% in the policy rates is bound to see a rise in the borrowing costs for the industry and the

household borrowers, it would be balanced by the easing of inflation over the medium term. There are several external factors at play simultaneously which have to be dealt with by the RBI and the government. "Both RBI and the government are working in perfect coordination to keep the impact of external volatility at the minimum, be it on the foreign exchange rates, fiscal situation or the overall macro-economic stability", the chamber said. The chamber welcomed the RBI decision to introduce a framework for securitisation of stressed assets, beyond the existing route of the Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs). "While the banks have managed well to reduce their Gross and Net NPAs, the stress in the system needs several transparent, well-defined measures to deal with the ups and downs of the business cycles.

Rise in home loan interest beyond 9.5% likely to have high impact on housing sales



Demand for 3BHK houses has outstripped that of 2BHKs for the first time, a Consumer Sentiment Survey said that the rise in home loan interest rate beyond the 9.5% mark is likely to have a big impact on housing sales.

At least 44% of the respondents preferred 3BHKs, followed by 38% favouring 2BHKs, said the survey conducted by the Industry body CII-Abarock. In the survey's H1 2021 edition, 46% preferred 2BHKs, and 40% voted for 3BHKs. Similarly, the demand for 4BHKs has also risen -- from 2% in the pre-Covid survey to 7% now.

The survey, conducted between January and June 2022, polled 5,500 participants responding via various digital platforms. This is even more significant considering that the survey also highlighted high inflation as a major cause of concern for respondent home buyers. 61% declared their disposable income as 'majorly impacted'. Most survey participants (92%) predict that the economy will either stay at current levels or improve marginally over the next 12 months. In the H1 2021 survey, respondents were more bullish about the economy - at least 16% expected it to improve significantly over the next one year.

"The demand for homes priced over Rs 1.5 crore continues to grow," says Anuj Puri, Chairman-CII Real Estate Knowledge Session on Tapping the Consumer Beat and Chairman - ANAROCK Group. "Compared to the pre-Covid 2019 survey, there has been a 4% rise in the vote share for these homes - from 6% pre-Covid to 10% in H1 2022. Buoyed by the increasing demand for luxury homes, developers have also significantly increased the new supply in this category in H1 2022. ANAROCK data revealed that 33,210 units priced at Rs 1.5 cr and above were launched across the top seven cities in H1 2022. Contrastingly, H1 2019 saw just 16,110 units launched in this segment. "The pandemic effect on home sizes continues - larger spaces in non-core urban areas remain in higher demand across the top cities. The reopening of offices and schools has changed little about this trend - as the increasing demand for the 3BHK configuration over 2BHKs vouchers," said Puri.

Interestingly, investors with an 8-10-year investment horizon have the most positive outlook in H1 2022. More than half of the respondent investors feel that the current housing market is a better investment proposition than it was 12 months ago, said the survey. The survey also highlighted that while ready-to-move homes still draw top buyer demand, the demand gap between ready and under-construction options continues to narrow. The ready vs new launch demand ratio is 30:25 in the H1 2022 survey, while it was 46:18 in the H1 2020 edition.

Sterling hits all-time low: two things can turn this around but neither is straightforward

While most people in the UK were still in bed in the early hours of Monday morning, the pound dived. It fell over 4% during Asia trading to reach its lowest ever level against the dollar of US 1.035, while also hitting 1.079 against the euro.

This was an exceptional fall, and continues its 3% decline against the US dollar on Friday in response to the hefty borrow-

ing and tax-cutting in Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng's mini-budget.

In parallel, traders have been dumping British government bonds, which is driving up long-term interest rates or yields. The yield on ten-year bonds, which heavily influences mortgage rates and other bank lending, is now above 4% for the first time since its highs following the 2007-09 financial crisis.



The pound rebounded back above US 1.08 in the hours after the European markets opened, while ten-year bond yields have

also eased a little. It is possible that the pound crash during the Asia session was over-extended because trading volumes in the British currency are lower, which makes it easier for smaller amounts of money to make a bigger impact on the market. It is not uncommon for lows to be made in early Asia trading, as has been the case in previous currency crashes.

Rupee rises 24 paise to 81.49 against US dollar

Indian rupee appreciated 24 paise to 81.49 against the US dollar in early trade on Friday ahead of the RBI monetary policy decision.

Forex traders said the rupee gained as the dollar retreated from its elevated levels. However, the local unit is likely to remain volatile amid the announcement of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) monetary policy decision.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 81.60 against the dollar, then touched 81.49, registering a gain of 24 paise over its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee recovered from record lows to settle 20 paise higher at 81.73 against the dollar.

The RBI will announce its policy rate decision at 1000 hrs on Friday with the market factoring in a 50 basis points rate hike, and a 75 basis points hike would be a surprise as other central banks have done recently, said Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury,



Finrex Treasury Advisors.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.10 per cent to 112.14.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.19 per cent to USD 88.32 per barrel.

"The dollar index has fallen, the US 10-year yield is at 3.79 per cent while oil is slightly down on the prospect of an output cut, weaker dol-

lar and a recession," Bhansali said.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex was trading 139.9 points or 0.25 per cent down at 56,270.06 and the broader NSE Nifty fell 32.80 points or 0.2 per cent to 16,785.30.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets as they offloaded shares worth Rs 3,599.42 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

Housing sales up 49 per cent in Jul-Sep across 8 major cities: PropTiger

NEW DELHI: Housing sales have risen 49 per cent year-on-year to 83,220 units in the July-September period across eight major cities on pent up demand, despite rise in interest rates and property prices, according to PropTiger.com.

Sales stood at 55,910 units in the same quarter last year. The sales have surpassed the pre-pandemic levels of 2019's Q3 (July - September), housing brokerage firm PropTiger.com said on Thursday in its quarterly report Real Insight Residential -- July-September 2022.

"The real estate industry is bouncing back from the pandemic and subsequent disruptions," said Vikas Wadhawan, Group CFO, PropTiger.com, Housing.com and Makaan.com. Despite the slight increase in overall interest rates, he said the demand for housing has not dipped.

He attributed the rise in demand to renewed thrust



towards home ownership. As per the data, housing sales in Mumbai jumped over two-fold to 28,800 units in the third quarter of this calendar year, from 14,160 units in the corresponding period of the previous year. Pune witnessed 55 per cent growth in sales to 15,700 units from 10,130 units, Delhi NCR saw 22 per cent increase in housing sales to 5,430 units from 4,460 units.

Sales in Ahmedabad rose 44 per cent to 7,880 units in July-September 2022, from 5,480 units in the year-ago period.

In Bengaluru, the sales of residential properties increased 20 per cent to 7,890 units from 6,550 units. Housing sales in Hyderabad rose 35 per cent to 10,570 units from 7,810 units.

However, PropTiger data showed that sales dropped by 5 per cent each in Chennai and Kolkata.

Housing sales in Chennai fell to 4,420 units from 4,670 units. The sales of residential properties in Kolkata declined to 2,530 units in July-September this year, from 2,650 units in the year-ago period.

Increased repo rate big dampener for auto industry: FADA



The hike in key interest rate by RBI is a big dampener for the automobile industry particularly for the price sensitive entry-level two-wheelers and passenger vehicles segments, Federation of Automotive Dealers Associations said on Friday.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points, the fourth straight increase since May with more hikes expected to rein in inflation.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), comprising three members from the RBI and three external experts, raised the key lending rate or the repo rate to 5.90% the highest since April 2019.

Asian stocks sink on German inflation, British tax cuts

BEIJING: Asian stocks sank again on Friday after German inflation spiked higher, British Prime Minister Liz Truss defended a tax-cut plan that rattled investors and Chinese manufacturing weakened.

Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Sydney retreated. Oil prices edged lower.

Wall Street's benchmark S and P 500 index fell 2.1 per cent on Thursday to its lowest level in almost two years after strong US jobs data reinforced expectations the Federal Reserve will stick to plans for more interest rate hikes. Investors increasingly worry the global economy might tip into recession following interest rate hikes by the Fed and central banks in Europe and



Asia to cool inflation that is at multi-decade highs. Global export demand is weakening and Russia's attack on Ukraine has disrupted oil and gas markets.

Markets slipped on Thursday after Germany reported September inflation accelerated

to 10.9 per cent and Chancellor Olaf Scholz said the world's fourth-biggest economy faces a double whammy as energy prices surge.

We'd be inclined to argue that we haven't yet seen the bottom, said ING economists

in a report.

The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.6 per cent to 3,023.91 after surveys of manufacturers showed production and new orders declined in September.

The Nikkei 225 in Tokyo fell 1.7 per cent to 25,979.75 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong declined by 0.2 per cent to 17,126.01. The Kospi in Seoul added 0.2 per cent to 2,173.71.

Sydney's S and P ASX 200 sank 0.7 per cent to 6,506.20. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets declined.

Investors already were uneasy about signs global activity was weakening before Truss's government announced multi-billion-dollar tax cuts.

Amit Shah approves release of Rs 488 cr to UP, Punjab, Goa for disaster mitigation

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday approved the release of Rs 488 crore to Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Goa as central share of the State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) for 2021-22.

Based on the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission, the central government has allocated Rs 32,031 crore for the SDMF and Rs 13,693 crore for the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) for 2021-22 to 2025-26, according to an official release.

These mitigation funds are to be used for undertaking mitigation activities, involving



local level and community-based interventions, which will reduce the risks from disasters and promote environment-friendly settlements and livelihood practices.

Gold gains Rs 406, Silver jumps Rs 905



Gold price in the national capital rose by Rs 406 to Rs 50,722 per 10 grams on Friday amid a rally in the international yellow metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 50,316 per 10 grams. Silver also jumped by Rs 905 to Rs 57,436 per kilogram from Rs 56,531 per kg in the previous trade.

American businesses struck by how much more digital India has become: Jaishankar

American businesses are struck by how much more digital India has become and there is a broad sense of overall appreciation of the ease of doing business in the country, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

During a luncheon on Wednesday, USISPF president Mukesh Agni presented Jaishankar with USISPF's coffee table book titled, 'We The People', chronicling 75 years of the US-India story, strengthened by the minister's efforts. The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) is committed to creating the most powerful strategic partnership between the U.S. and India.

Delighted to participate in a business luncheon with USISPF, Jaishankar tweeted. Noted the high interest in transformational changes

happening in India in energy, health, climate, infrastructure and logistics and defence domains, he said.

American businesses are struck by how much more digital India has become, how effectively the government is practising digital delivery, what a change that has been in startups and innovation, and how much more enthusiastic students and young innovators are. A lot of positive references to the drone policy, to the change in labor laws to the production linked incentive policies, Jaishankar told a group of Indian reporters on Wednesday at the conclusion of the US visit.

During the Washington DC-leg of his visit, he held two separate luncheons with leaders from the corporate sectors organised by US India Business Council and US In-



dia Strategic and Partnership Forum.

I almost invite, I won't say criticism, but I invite problems. I asked people to say give me your difficulties. But yesterday and today, much

more than I had before I largely heard a positive appreciation. (It) doesn't mean that there is no room to grow, doesn't mean that we are close to perfection, he said.

I'm very real about where

we are, and I think so is the government and the Prime Minister. But it did leave me with a reflection that we appear to have made solid progress and more importantly communicated that to the

American business community, Jaishankar said.

During the luncheon organised by USIBC, Jaishankar met with the CEOs and senior industry executives representing Occidental, Lockheed Martin, Tata Sons, Blackstone, Morgan Stanley, Citi, Liberty Mutual, Google, Stripe, and Carlyle.

During his lunch discussions organised by USIBC on Tuesday, Jaishankar shared with the CEOs and executives his views on India's prospects for economic growth, and as a hub for direct investment in manufacturing, digital economy, services, energy, and other key sectors.

The bullish sentiment on India was on clear display. Shared the conviction that stronger business links will further galvanize our relationship, the minister said in a tweet.

He also discussed India's forthcoming presidency of the G20, the growing prominence of the Quad platform in the Indo-Pacific, and the central importance of US-India Business ties in steady and strengthening bilateral relations, according to a USIBC statement.

Additional, key topics of discussion at the lunch included the situation in the Indo-Pacific, geopolitical tensions, and the impact on the global economy, as well as the challenges on climate and energy policy.

During the lunch, industry executives expressed optimism regarding India's growth trajectory, and commitment to engage with the government further on these issues, as well as policies for expanding foreign direct investment, the statement said.

A great deal of world's history will be written in Indo-Pacific in coming years: Biden

United States of America is committed to ensuring a free, open, stable and secure Indo-Pacific, President Joe Biden has said, asserting that a great deal of the world's history will be written in the strategically vital region over the coming years.

The president addressed the visiting leaders from a dozen Pacific Island countries in Washington on Thursday in the first-ever summit held to make the Indo-Pacific region safe and keep these island nations away from the increasing influence of China, which in the past few years has made extraordinary outreach efforts in the region.

"Today, security in the Pacific and for the Pacific Islanders remains as critical as ever to us and I hope to you as well. The security of America, quite frankly, and the world depends on your security and the security of the Pacific Islands. And I really mean that, Biden said.

He said the purpose behind the summit was also about deepening enduring commitment to each other and a shared future and commitment to tackling the climate crisis, which threatens all.

The summit was attended by heads of state from Fiji, Solomon Island, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Marshall Island, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Polynesia, New Caledonia and Cook Islands.

"We're seeing the consequences of climate change around the world very vividly, including in the United States right now. And I know your nations feel it acutely. For you all, it's an existential threat. It's an existential threat, Biden said.

We are also committed to working together to equitably rebuild the global economy in the wake of COVID-19 and Russia's war, to ensure an Indo-Pacific region that's free and open, one that is stable and



prosperous, and resilient and secure, he said.

A great deal of the history of our world is going to be written in the Indo-Pacific over the coming years and decades, he said, adding that the Pacific Islands are a critical voice in

shaping that future.

That's why my administration has made it a priority to strengthen our partnership with your countries and with the Pacific Islands Forum, he said.

Biden announced more than USD 810 million in expanded

US programmes to improve the lives of Pacific Islanders, which includes more than USD 130 million in new investments to support climate resilience and build sustainable blue economies in the Pacific Islands; prepare for climate impacts on

public health and food security, and to strengthen sustainable development; and also to build a better early warning capacity to predict, prepare for, and respond to climate hazards.

This is going to build on approximately USD 375 million in climate programmes we currently have in the region, he said. President Biden also announced that his administration will also take several important diplomatic steps. I'm proud to announce that, following appropriate consultations, we will recognise the Cook Islands and Niue as sovereign states, he said.

We look forward to successfully concluding negotiations for a Compact of Free Association with three of our closest partners in the region - the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, he said.

According to the White House, the Summit reflects

America's broadening and deepening cooperation on key issues such as climate change, pandemic and economic recovery, maritime security, environmental protection, and advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The Biden administration believes that the Pacific Islands region an ocean continent spanning nearly 15 per cent of the Earth's surface is a vital sub-region of the Indo-Pacific.

It holds opportunities and challenges, from the climate crisis to an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

The United States recognises that geography links the Pacific's future to our own: US prosperity and security depend on the Pacific region remaining free and open, it said.

The White House said it will coordinate with its allies and partners as well as with the Pacific Islands to avoid redundancy and best meet the needs of the Pacific Islands.

Suu Kyi convicted again, Australian economist gets 3 years



A court in military-ruled Myanmar convicted former leader Aung San Suu Kyi in another criminal case Thursday and sentenced Australian economist Sean Turnell to three years in prison for violating Myanmar's official secrets act, a legal official said.

Suu Kyi received a three-year sentence after being tried and convicted with Turnell under the secrets law, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to release information about the case.

Three members of her Cabinet were also found guilty, each receiving sentences of three years.

Turnell, an associate professor in economics at Sydney's Macquarie University, had served as an adviser to Suu Kyi, who was detained in the capital Naypyitaw when her elected government was ousted by the army on Feb. 1, 2021.

He has been in detention for almost 20 months. He was arrested five days after the military takeover by security forces at a hotel in Yangon, the country's biggest city, while waiting for a car to take him to the city's international airport.

He had arrived back in Myanmar from Australia to take up a new position as a special consultant to Suu Kyi less than a month before he was detained. As director of the Myanmar Development Institute, he already had lived in Naypyitaw for several years.

The day after the military's takeover, he posted a message on Twitter that he was: Safe for now but heartbroken for what all this means for the people of Myanmar. The bravest, kindest person I know. They deserve so much better.

He was charged along with Suu Kyi and the three former Cabinet ministers on the basis of documents seized from him. The exact details of their offense have not been made public, though state television said last year that Turnell had access to secret state financial information and had tried to flee the country.

Saka Panja Sahib centenary: Sikh pilgrims to depart Pakistan on October 28



FW DESK

Sikh pilgrims will depart for Pakistan on October 28 from the Attari-Wagah border near Amritsar to take part in the Saka Panja Sahib centenary event at Gurdwara Panja Sahib, said Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee president Harmeet Singh Kalka on Tuesday.

The pilgrims will return to Amritsar on November 2, he said. They will also visit Lahore and other gurdwaras in Pakistan, including Nankana Sahib.

"Of 240 pilgrims, 40 pilgrims will be sent by the DSGMC from Delhi, Noida, Gurugram, Faridabad and Ghaziabad," Kalka said.

He said the pilgrims must be inoculated with both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine and must undergo a COVID-19 test 72 hours before departing for Pakistan.

UNSC to vote on resolution condemning Russia's referendum in Ukraine

The United Nations Security Council has scheduled a vote for Friday afternoon on a resolution that would condemn Russia for its illegal so-called referendum in four Ukrainian regions and declare that they have no validity.

The US- and Albanian-sponsored resolution would call on all countries not to recognise any alterations to the status of Ukraine's Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

It would reaffirm the UN commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

PM Modi meets Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday met his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida here and conveyed his deepest condolences over the sudden demise of former prime minister Shinzo Abe as he underlined the late Japanese leader's contributions in strengthening the bilateral partnership as well as his vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

Indian Prime Minister Modi, who is here to attend the state funeral of Abe, met Kishida ahead of the ceremony and the two leaders renewed



The Kremlin has announced plans to move on annexing Russian-controlled areas of the four regions on Friday, and Russia is certain to veto the resolution. US Ambassador Linda

UN meeting produces sense that a "new epoch" is arriving

The war in Ukraine and its global fallout transfixed the meeting of world leaders at the UN General Assembly this year. When it wasn't out front, it lurked in the background of virtually every speech.

There were near-unanimous calls for an end to the seven-month war, with rich and poor countries decrying the fallout from the conflict widespread shortages and rising prices not only for food but for energy, inflation hitting the cost of living everywhere, and growing global inequality.

The speeches and side meetings produced no breakthroughs toward peace, but they did put the top diplomats from Russia and Ukraine in the same room for the first time in many months, however briefly.

Blinken and Pak FM Bilawal discuss importance of managing 'responsible' ties with India



The importance of managing a "responsible relationship" with India and addressing the debt issue with China so that Pakistan can recover more quickly from the impact of the devastating floods were the key focus of the talks between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

During the meeting at the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State Department on Monday, Blinken also said US and Pakistan will continue to work closely on counterterrorism issues. In our discussion today, we talked about the importance of managing a responsible relationship with India, and I also

urged our colleagues to engage China on some of the important issues of debt relief and restructure so that Pakistan can more quickly recover from the floods, Blinken said at an event here to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of US-Pakistan relations.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been strained over the Kashmir issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The ties between the two countries nosedived after India abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating the State into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019.

Tense Japan holds funeral for assassinated ex-leader Abe



A tense Japan prepared Tuesday for a rare and controversial state funeral for assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the longest-serving leader in his nation's modern history and one of the most divisive.

Tokyo was under maximum security, with angry protests opposing the funeral planned around the capital and nation. Hours before the ceremony began, dozens of people carrying bouquets of flowers queued at public flower-laying stands at nearby Kudanzaka park.

Thousands of uniformed police mobilized around the

Budokan hall, where the funeral is being held, and at major train stations. Roads around the venue are closed throughout the day, and coin lockers at main stations were sealed for security. World leaders, including US Vice President Kamala Harris, were in town for the funeral.

Opponents of the state-sponsored funeral, which has its roots

in prewar imperial ceremonies, say taxpayers' money should be spent on more meaningful causes, such as addressing widening economic disparities caused by Abe's policies.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has been criticised for forcing through the costly event to honour his mentor, Abe, who was assassinated in July. There has also been a widening controversy about Abe's and the governing party's decades-long close ties with the ultra-conservative Unification Church, accused of raking in huge donations by brainwashing adherents.

Cuba remained in the dark early on Wednesday after Hurricane Ian knocked out its power grid and devastated some of the country's most important tobacco farms when it hit the island's western tip as a major storm.

Authorities were working overnight to gradually restore service to the country's 11 million people, according to a statement from Cuba's Electric Union. Power was initially knocked out to about 1 million people in Cuba's western provinces, but later the entire grid collapsed. Ian hit a Cuba that has been struggling with an economic crisis and has faced frequent power outages in recent months.

It made landfall as a Category 3 storm on the island's western end, devastating Pinar del Rio province, where much of the tobacco used for Cuba's iconic cigars is grown. Tens of thousands of people were evacuated and others fled the area ahead of the arrival of Ian, which caused flooding, damaged houses and toppled trees.

Evangelicals have been converging on the massive Abaete dune system for some 25 years but especially lately, with thousands now coming each week to sing, pray and enter tranclene states. Some scrawl prayers on scraps of paper to be burned.

I never tire of coming up here and glorifying, said Deja Soares, 47, adding that she has seen the paralysed walk and the blind see. The things God does here are incredible. This year the dunes have become a flashpoint after City Hall began building a plaza and welcome center at one spot along

Model fearing Myanmar military heads to asylum in Canada

A fashion model from Myanmar who feared being arrested by the country's military government if she was forced back home from exile has arrived in Canada, which she says has granted her asylum. Thaw Nandar Aung, also known as Han Lay, left on a flight from Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport early on Wednesday morning, according to Archayon Kraithong, a deputy commissioner of Thailand's Immigration Bureau.

Thaw Nandar Aung wrote on Facebook she had arrived in Canada and thanked her fans for their support. I will do my best to help my beloved Myanmar and the people of Myanmar as much as I can, she wrote in the post seen on Thursday. Thaw Nandar Aung had told Radio Free Asia, a US-government funded broadcaster, on Tuesday that she was headed to Canada, after having been granted political asylum there with the assistance of the UN refugee agency and the Canadian Embassy in Thailand.

World Heart Day: Tobacco major risk factor for heart diseases, strong law must to check fatalities, say experts

Tobacco consumption is a major risk factor for not only cancer but also cardiovascular diseases, experts warned on World Heart Day on Thursday and demanded early passage of the COTPA Amendment Bill to ban point-of-sale advertisements.

The draft Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act Amendment Bill also proposes banning public designated smoking zones to ensure a healthy and fit India. The theme for this year's World Heart Day is "Use Heart for Every Heart."

At a webinar organised by public health platform Tobacco Free India', Dr Uma Kumar, head of the Department of



Rheumatology, AIIMS, highlighted the link between tobacco and cardiovascular diseases.

"Tobacco is the world's leading cause of death, responsible for 44 per cent of all fatalities caused by non-communicable diseases, or 17.9 million deaths annually," she said.

Tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke are major causes of cardiovascular diseases, including heart attacks

Vatican sanctions Nobel laureate after Timor accusations

The Catholic Church's decades-long sex abuse scandal caught up with a Nobel Peace Prize winner on Thursday, with the Vatican confirming that it had sanctioned the East Timor independence hero, Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, following allegations that he sexually abused boys there during the 1990s.

The Vatican admission came a day after a Dutch magazine, De Groene Amsterdammer, exposed the claims against the revered Catholic bishop, citing two of Belo's alleged victims and reporting there were others who hadn't come forward in East Timor, where the church wields enormous influence.

Germany set to enter recession in 2023: Economic forecast

Germany is set to enter a recession in 2023, with a decline in gross domestic product (GDP) of 0.4 per cent, according to a joint forecast published by leading economic institutes in the country.

In the spring, the institutes were still predicting that Europe's largest economy would grow by 3.1 per cent, reports Xinhua news agency.

However, the new forecast "mainly reflects the extent of the energy crisis", according to the forecast published on Thursday by RWI Leibniz Institute for Eco-

nomic Research, the Halle Institute for Economic Research (IWH), the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, and the ifo Institute. A "significant part" of Germany's gas supply has been lost since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, increasing the risk that "remaining supply and storage volumes will not be sufficient to meet demand during the coming winter". Gas prices in Europe have tripled, since Russian supplies to Germany via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline have been repeatedly reduced, and finally stopped altogether.

The most common form reported is cinnabar (mercury sulfide, or HgS), a bright red mineral used extensively by the ancient Maya for decoration, craft, and ritual purposes such as burials and in tombs.

Archaeologists have been finding mercury at archaeological sites in Mexico and Central America for more than a century.

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Heavy mercury contamination at Maya sites reveals a deep historic legacy

Mercury is a toxic heavy metal. When leached into the natural environment, it accumulates and builds up through food chains, ultimately threatening human health and ecosystems.

In the last century, human activities have increased atmospheric mercury concentrations by 300-500 per cent above natural levels.

However, in some parts of

the world, humans have been modifying the mercury cycle for thousands of years. This anthropogenic (human-caused) mercury use has led to mercury entering places globally it wouldn't otherwise be found, such as in lakes or soils in remote locations.

One region with an especially long (but poorly documented) history of mercury use is Mexico and Central America. Early Me-



soamerican societies such as the Olmec had been mining and using mercury in southern Mexico as early as 2000 BCE.

In our research, published in Frontiers in Environmental Science, we review the ways the Maya used mercury, the mystery of how they sourced it, and the environmental legacy of past mercury use.

Our present mercury problem has a deep legacy. Understanding its origins will also help us understand the trajectory of humanity's fascination with, use of and

abuse of this mercurial element. Archaeologists have been finding mercury at archaeological sites in Mexico and Central America for more than a century.

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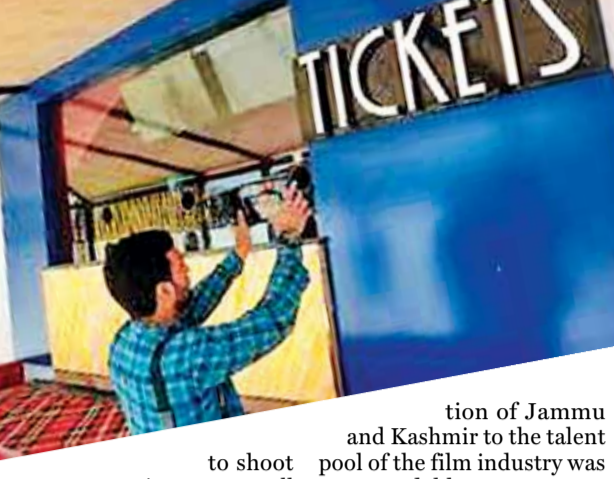
their base, with a staircase up the sand soon to follow.

A future phase would entail a platform atop the plateau. Defenders of the project say it's necessary to protect the fragile dunes from the increasingly heavy foot traffic. But it has come under fire from Afro-Brazilian religious groups, who have been performing their own rituals in the dunes for generations, and protest what they see as elected officials abusing their power to coopt and Christianize yet another public space.

Kashmir is back on the cinema map

The best news of the week is the return of cinema screens in Srinagar. The IMAX chain has revived the cinema business in Kashmir after a gap of 30 years following the start of militancy and terrorism in the late 1980s. The Kashmir valley had as many as nine cinema halls. That was the single-screen era. Jammu and Kashmir was a part of the East Punjab territory as it was known in the film trade (West Punjab having gone to Pakistan). The valley was fittingly described as heaven on earth where a lot many films were

shot. In fact, it was a favourite location



to shoot romantic songs as well as the place where romances started. Also, the contribu-

tion of Jammu and Kashmir to the talent pool of the film industry was commendable. Three decades ago, when there was peace, like the rest

of the country, Kashmiris too enjoyed the movie-watching experience. My job at that time was to transcribe the cinema collections that came through telegrams and, later on fax, for a trade paper I worked for. There was nothing abnormal, the Kashmiri loved or rejected a film just like any other circuit. But things changed. There were no collection figures from Kashmir to compile. When the insurgency began, the idea seemed to create panic and cinemas being public places were targeted. A bomb blast at one of the cinemas put paid to the exhibition trade. Efforts to revive the cinemas in the 1990s were not successful.



Woman, minor arrested in shooting of rapper PnB Rock in LA

Two people have been arrested in connection with the fatal shooting of rapper PnB Rock and Los Angeles police were searching Wednesday for a third suspect they warned should be considered armed and dangerous. The Philadelphia artist, whose real name is Rakim

Allen, was gunned down Sept 13 at a South LA restaurant while eating with his girlfriend. A robber approached their table and demanded items from the rapper, according to investigators.

A minor under the age of 18 and a woman were taken into custody Tuesday, according to the Los Angeles Police Department. The minor could face a murder charge and 38-year-old Shauntel Trone was arrested on suspicion of being an accessory to murder, a police statement said.

A third suspect, 40-year-old Freddie Lee Trone, remained at large, said LAPD Capt. Kelly Muniz.

He should be considered armed and dangerous," police said in the statement. "If you see him, you are urged to call 911 for immediate assistance.

POTPOURRI



Judge : R. Kelly to pay \$300,000 to victim in sex crimes case
A federal judge signalled Wednesday that she plans to order disgraced R&B superstar R. Kelly to pay more than USD 300,000 to one his victims in a decades-long scheme to use his fame to sexually abuse young fans.

A restitution order by U.S. District Judge Ann Connelly that was still being finalised is meant to cover the cost of treatment for herpes and psychotherapy. The victim, referred to only by a pseudonym, has accused the jailed Kelly of giving her the sexually transmitted disease during one of their encounters.

Kelly could be on the hook for tens of thousands of dollars more to pay for herpes treatment and counseling for a second victim once the final tally is calculated. The judge rejected a third claim by another accuser.

The Grammy-winning, multiplatinum-selling songwriter appeared at the hearing in federal court in Brooklyn via video from a lockup in Chicago, and only spoke to exchange greetings with the judge and to turn down an offer to say more. None of the victims were in attendance.

Earlier this year, Kelly was sentenced to 30 years in prison following a trial in New York where the jury found him guilty of racketeering and sex trafficking. A second trial in Chicago ended on Sept. 14 with his conviction on charges of producing child pornography and enticing girls for sex.

The question now in the New York case becomes when and how Kelly will pay the restitution. Prosecutors claim he has access to as much as USD 5 million to go along with about 28,000 seized from his inmate commissary account that defense attorney Jennifer Bonjean said was made up of small donations from fans.

Mika says he has bought private island, but doesn't disclose location



Punjabi music star Mika Singh, who has belted out hits such as 'Mauja Hi Mauja', 'Dil Mein Baji Guitar' and 'Jugni, has bought a private island that comes with a lake, seven boats and ten horses. But he hasn't disclosed the location.

The singer took to his social media handle to share a video in which he can be seen enjoying a motorboat ride by himself in the lake.

Sharing the video, he revealed other details in the caption, which read: "Pop singer @mikasingh is having a great time at his little paradise. The first Indian singer to have his own private island with a lake, 7 boats and 10 horses. That's what you call a real King!"

In the video, the singer can be seen wearing a blue T-shirt and a cap. But little else is known about either the price of the property or its location.

Mika was in the news lately for his personal life. He participated in the TV show 'Swayamvar: Mika Di Vohti', which was won by the actress Akanksha Puri. The two are getting to know each other better. They are yet to confirm their nuptial plans, though.

Rashmika Mandanna dances with Govinda on 'Saami Saami'

Southern sensation Rashmika Mandanna shook a leg with actor Govinda on her raring number 'Saami Saami', from the blockbuster film 'Pushpa: The Rise' starring Allu Arjun.

The actress recently marked her presence in 'DID Super Moms' where she danced on her now trending number. She was on the show to promote her maiden Bollywood movie 'Goodbye' starring Amitabh Bachchan and Neena Gupta.

'Goodbye' is a story that touches every emotional chord in your heart and makes you realise the importance of your loved ones along with the down-



turns of life. Rashmika will also be sharing screen space with Neena Gupta, Sunil Grover, Pavaal Gulati, Ashish Vidyarthi, and Elli AvrRam in the film, which will release on October 7. Rashmika will also soon commence work on the second part of the Pushpa franchise. The film will see her reuniting with Allu Arjun.

Al Pacino, Charlie Heaton & Diana Silvers to star in feature film 'Billy Knight'

Hollywood veteran Al Pacino is set to star opposite "Stanger Things" actor Charlie Heaton in movie "Billy Knight".

The drama, which marks writer-director Alec Griffen Roth's feature film debut, also stars Diana Silvers. According to entertainment website Variety, the film follows grad school stu-



dents Alex (Heaton) and Emily (Silvers) who dream of becoming filmmakers. "In addition to wanting to make it in the movie business, Alex is also grappling

with the death of his father, a failed screenwriter. The only thing Alex's father left him was a box of unfinished scripts and a handkerchief with

the name Billy Knight embroidered on it. Those clues send Alex on a quest to find the mysterious and elusive Billy Knight," the plotline reads.

The film is produced by Autumn Bailey-Ford and Cameron Burnett of Prominent Productions, Sevier Crespo and Amanda Kiely.

Thoroughly enjoyed 'Brahmastra' experience: Ranveer Singh

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh on Tuesday gave a shout-out to the team of "Brahmastra Part One: Shiva" and said he thoroughly enjoyed watching the big-screen spectacle.

Starring Ranveer's contemporaries Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt, the Ayan Mukerji-directed epic fantasy movie has been a runaway success, raising over Rs 360 crores gross at the global box office.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the 'Brahmastra' experience, the 'Astraverse'. It is a fantastic big-screen offering and something unlike anything we've seen in Hindi cinema. I truly appreciate the efforts of my friends and putting that out there," the actor, who is rumoured to be attached with



the second part of "Brahmastra", said.

Ranveer was speaking at a session during the inaugural day of the FICCI Frames 2022 here.

The actor, known for delivering blockbusters such as "Bajirao Mastani", "Simmba",

and "Gully Boy", believes the Indian entertainment sector has witnessed a rapid acceleration in recent years that has led to a "clear distinction" between entertainment meant for the big screen and at home.

"There is now a very clear distinction between what is meant for the big screen. With the films releasing in theatres, it's imperative to have big-screen appeal, visual spectacle, scale, something you can't really experience at home or then a community watch. "It's not the same when you're sitting alone and watching at home on the couch... It's a completely new landscape with the rise of new verticals... Our Indian audiences are watching shows that have been created in other countries and the reverse is happening too," he added.

Talking about his acting endeavours, Ranveer said his next movie "Cirkus", directed by his "Simmba" maker Rohit Shetty, is "quite disruptive for my own filmography".

Satish Kaushik to essay role of Babu Jagjivan Ram in 'Emergency'

Actor Satish Kaushik has been roped in to play activist and politician Jagjivan Ram in the upcoming film 'Emergency', where actress Kangana Ranaut will be seen essaying the role of former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Talking about Satish Kaushik joining the film's cast, Kangana says: "Jagjivan Ram was a very popular leader. One of the most

loved and revered leaders of his times. When Mrs Gandhi refused his request of relaxing Emergency, he quit the Congress and there were grave consequences for her." "That was his relevance. I needed somebody for this role who has his strength, his wit and his sarcasm. Satish ji was an obvious choice for this role. I am looking forward to my scenes with him as an actor.



They are some of the most engaging, entertaining and strong scenes in the film."

Directed by the actress, the

film's array of actors are a force to reckon with. Anupam Kher will be seen as the revolutionary leader J P Narayan, Shreyas Talpade essays the role of late politician Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Mahima Chaudhry will be seen playing the role of author Puppul Jayakar, Milind Soman will essay Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, Vishak Nair will be seen as Sanjay Gandhi.

Mohd Siraj replaces injured Bumrah for remainder of T20I series against SA

Mohammed Siraj on Friday replaced injured pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah for India's remaining two T20 International matches against the visiting South African team.

Bumrah was on Thursday ruled out of the upcoming T20 World Cup due to a back stress fracture. "The All-India Senior Selection Committee named

Mohd. Siraj as replacement for injured Jasprit Bumrah for the remainder of the T20I series against South Africa," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in the statement on Friday.

"Bumrah has sustained a back injury and is currently under the supervision of the BCCI Medical Team." The 28-year-old Siraj, a



right-arm pacer, has so far played in five T20Is and picked up five wickets from them. His last T20I match was against

Sri Lanka at Dharamsala in February this year. India lead the three-match T20I series against South Africa 1-0 after a comprehensive eight-wicket win in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday. The second and third matches will be played in Guwahati (October 2) and Indore (October 4).

Indian squad for South Af-

rica T20Is: Rohit Sharma (Captain), KL Rahul (vice-captain), Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Dinesh Karthik (wicket-keeper), R Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Harshal Patel, Deepak Chahar, Umesh Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Shahbaz Ahmed, Mohd Siraj.

Hardy Sandhu & Parineeti Chopra speak in Punjabi on 'Code Name Tiranga' set

Bollywood Actress Parineeti Chopra said that she and her co-star Harry Sandhu connected the very second they met on set and even spoke in their mother tongue all the time. She added that it was music and food that broke the ice between them.

She said: "Hardy and I connected the very second we met each other, it was as if we had known



each other for years. Given that we are both Punjabis we would speak in our mother tongue on set all the

time and no points for guessing what the 2 things we connected most on are - music and food."

She said that it has been a treat to work with Hardy. "He is a very giving actor. I guess the audience can see the camaraderie that we share and hence they are calling our pairing fresh and they are looking forward to seeing our chemistry on screen.

FIFA Women World Cup 2023 ticket sales begin October 6



FIFA has announced that tickets for the forthcoming Women World Cup to be hosted by Australia and New Zealand begins next year begins October 6.

The first-ever co-hosted women's tournament will kick off on 20 July 2023, with 32 teams competing in 64 matches across nine host cities and 10 stadiums. Ticket sales will begin with an exclusive Visa ticket pre-sale from 6-12 October before going on sale to the general public from 13-21 October.

FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura said: "As the first FIFA Women's World Cup to be held in the southern hemisphere and the first-ever edition to feature 32 teams, the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023

will truly be a tournament of firsts, providing an important platform to inspire fans and create a new generation of role models through football.

"With just over nine months to go until the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 kicks off and tickets affordably priced for everyone, we look forward to giving fans a chance to be part of another incredible celebration of football next year and seeing women's football go Beyond Greatness in 2023."

Sarai Bareman, FIFA's Chief Women's Football Officer, said: "The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand will be an incredible and hugely exciting moment for fans from across the host countries and around the world."

Focus is on adaptability ahead of T20 WC: Arshdeep Singh



Young India left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh said "adaptability" is the main focus of the team ahead of the T20 World Cup, starting next month in Australia. The T20 World Cup will be held in Australia from October 16 to November 13, and Arshdeep said the Indian bowlers are geared up for the tough challenge that awaits them.

"Adaptability is the big motive of our team. The main motive is adapting to the situations and demands of the team, whatever the situations and conditions are," said the 23-year-old pacer, who made a sensational comeback after a disappointing outing in the Asia Cup recently. "When we go there (Australia) we will see how the conditions are. I'm looking forward

to doing well." Arshdeep (3/32) and Deepak Chahar (2/24) broke South Africa's backbone to help India register an easy eight-wicket win over the Proteas in the low-scoring first T20I of the three-match series here on Wednesday night.

"We are trying to tick all the boxes in the practice sessions and trying to execute all our plans on the field. Today (Wednesday) was really a good example of showing a good power play bowling and we are looking forward to do amazing things in the coming days," Arshdeep said at the post-match presentation.

The left-arm pacer, a key arsenal in India's death bowling scheme of things for the

ICC showpiece next month, missed the preceding three T20Is against Australia after he was sent to the NCA for conditioning.

"The purpose of the last 10 days was to get refreshed and come back stronger and fitter that will help me in my bowling. I feel really refreshed and looking forward to doing good things on the field," Arshdeep said after his exploits with the ball.

Bowling with the new ball in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Arshdeep came back with a bang, grabbing three wickets in five balls to reduce South Africa to 8 for 4 inside the second over.

The visitors never recovered from Arshdeep's early blows to lose the opening match of the series, which is the last leg of preparation for both the teams before heading to Australia. In the preceding T20 series against Australia, India had defeated the reigning world champions 2-1 after losing the first match.

Arshdeep Singh, who made his debut in the tour of England in July this year, said he always strives to give his best on the field without bothering about selection.

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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