

REGION

2

DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL FLAGS OFF 50 LOW-FLOOR CNG BUSES



Delhi CM Kejriwal allocates Rs 25 crore for Chhath Puja

NEW DELHI: Delhi government has made grand preparations for Chhath Puja at 1,100 sites and allocated Rs 25 crore for the festival, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Friday. Chhath will be celebrated on October 30 and 31. Kejriwal said Chhath would be celebrated on a grand scale after people were stuck at home for two years due to COVID-19. «For the last two years, the festivities were affected by the pandemic,» he said. The Delhi chief minister also urged people to wear masks and observe all safety protocols while celebrating. «Please remember that even though the intensity of Covid spread has decreased and fines have been withdrawn, Covid is still out there. Please wear a mask when you set out to celebrate. Our health is our own responsibility, we must ensure that we don't fall sick due to oversight,» Kejriwal said.



During a digital briefing, Kejriwal also spoke about how the festival had grown since the formation of the AAP government in 2014. «Due to the pandemic condition over the last two years, the Delhi government could not take up large-scale preparations for community Chhath celebrations and a lot of people had to celebrate at home. However, since we have come to power, we have taken Chhath celebrations to a grand level in Delhi,» Kejriwal said. Claiming that before Chhath was a mere formality for the Delhi government before the AAP assumed charge, he said there were barely 69 sites where Chhath was celebrated in 2014. «The government back then spent a mere Rs 2.5 crore. But now, we will celebrate Chhath

BANKING & FINANCE

6

PAYTM ANNUALISED RUN RATE OF LOAN DISBURSALS TOUCHES RS 34,000 CRORE IN SEPTEMBER



SC delivers split verdict in Karnataka hijab ban matter, matter referred to CJI

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday delivered a split verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the Karnataka High Court judgement refusing to lift the ban on hijab in educational institutions of the state. While Justice Hemant Gupta dismissed the appeals against the high court verdict, Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia allowed them. «There is divergence of opinion,» Justice Gupta, who was heading the bench, said at the outset while pronouncing the verdict. In view of the split verdict, the bench directed that the appeals against the high court verdict be placed before the Chief Justice of India for constituting an appropriate larger bench. While pronouncing the judgement, Justice Dhulia said the high court had taken a wrong path and that wearing Hijab is ultimately «a matter of choice, nothing more, nothing less». He said his main thrust in the



judgment is concept of essential religious practice which was not essential to the dispute. Saying that his focus was on education of the girl child, especially in rural areas, Justice Dhulia asked, «Are we making her life any better?». While allowing the appeals against the high court verdict, Justice Dhulia said he has quashed the state government's February 5, 2022 order which banned wearing clothes that disturb equality, integrity, and public order in schools and colleges. On March 15, the high court had dismissed the petitions filed by a section of Muslim students of the Government Pre-University Girls College

POTPOURRI

8

'BIGG BOSS 16' SAJID KHAN WILL NOT BE OUSTED FROM THE SHOW



JIH welcomes justice Dhulia's verdict

FW DESK New Delhi The National Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH), Rahamathunnissa has welcomed Justice Dhulia's verdict in the Hijab case being heard by the Supreme Court of India. In a statement to the media, the JIH National Secretary said: «We welcome the verdict by Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia in the hijab case. We appreciate his position that wearing a hijab is a matter of choice. We concur with Justice Dhulia's remarks that the «Karnataka High Court took the wrong path» and that Article 15 is «a matter of choice, nothing more and nothing else. We appeal to the judiciary to expedite the matter as it is already affecting many girls and depriving them of their fundamental right to attend college and study in the education stream of their choice.» She also appealed to the government of Karnataka to withdraw its controversial order in view of Justice Dhulia's observation and make an end to the unwarranted controversy. Rahamathunnissa explained further that: «Jamaat-e-Islami Hind feels that it is not the job of courts to decide about essential religious practices of any religion. We are not against the practice of uniforms in educational institutions.

I resolved Kashmir issue: PM in Gujarat



I resolved the Kashmir issue because I walked in the footsteps of Sardar Patel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during his address at Anand in Gujarat ahead of the Assembly elections in the state. He took an oblique dig at India's first prime minister JawaharLal Nehru, blaming him for complicating Kashmir's accession to India. He didn't, however, name him. «Sardarsaheb persuaded all the princely states to merge with India. But another person handled this one issue of Kashmir,» Modi said. «As I am following the footsteps of Sardarsaheb, I have values of the land of Sardar and that was the reason I resolved the problem of Kashmir and paid true tributes to Sardar Patel,» Modi added. The BJP has always blamed Nehru for taking the Kashmir issue to the United Nations which made the region contested in the world's eyes.

Forex reserves rise USD 204 mln to USD 532.868 bln

MUMBAI: India's forex reserves rose by USD 204 million to USD 532.868 billion for the week ended October 7 on an increase in the value of gold holdings, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped by USD 4.854 billion to USD 532.664 billion. The reserves had been falling for many weeks now as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused

PM Modi launches rural roads scheme in Himachal Pradesh

CHAMBA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched the PradhanMantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-III in Himachal Pradesh for upgrading 3,125 km of rural roads. He also laid foundation stones of two hydropower projects the 48 MW Chanju-III hydro-electric project and the 30 MW Deothal Chanju hydro-electric project. More than Rs 420 crore has been sanctioned by the central government under this phase of the PMGSY-III for upgrading 440 km of rural roads in 15

WPI inflation eases to 18-month low of 10.7 per cent in Sep



NEW DELHI: The wholesale price-based inflation declined to a 18-month low of 10.7 per cent in September, as prices of food, fuel and manufactured items softened. Although the wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation declined for the fourth consecutive month, it continued to remain in double digit for the 18th month since April 2021. «Inflation in September, 2022 is primarily contributed by rise in prices of mineral oils, food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, chemicals & chemical products, basic metals, electricity, textiles etc. as compared to

the corresponding month of the previous year,» an official statement said. The wholesale inflation was 12.41 per cent in August and 11.80 per cent in September last year. This year, WPI touched a record high of 15.88 per cent in May. Economists say the gradual month-on-month decline in WPI is mainly due to moderation in commodity prices and pegged inflation to come down further with overall recovery momentum and weaker outlook on commodity prices. Inflation in food articles in September eased to 11.03 per cent, against 12.37

DELHI EXCISE POLICY

ED raids 25 locations in national capital



NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday raided at least 25 locations in the national capital as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation into the now-scrapped Delhi Excise policy, officials said. The premises covered under the search operation belong to private entities linked to liquor dealership and distributorship, they said. The federal agency has conducted multiple raids in this case till now and had also arrested Sameer Mahandru, a liquor businessman and managing director of liquor manufacturing company Indospirit, last month in the case. The money laundering case stems from a CBI FIR that had named Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia as an accused among others. The scheme came under the scanner after the Delhi LG recommended a CBI probe into the alleged irregularities in the implementation of Delhi's Excise Policy 2021-22. He had also suspended 11 excise officials in the matter.

Veteran socialist leader Mulayam Singh Yadav cremated at his native village Saifai

Saifai (UP): People in large numbers were headed Tuesday for the last rites of veteran socialist leader Mulayam Singh Yadav at his native village Saifai in Etawah district of Uttar Pradesh, the intermittent morning drizzle adding to the sombreness. The Samajwadi Party founder and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister passed away aged 82 at a private hospital in Gurugram on Monday. His mortal remains were brought to Saifai Monday evening and kept at his 'kothi' where thousands descended to pay their last respects to «Netaji», as Yadav was fondly called. Party workers and people in their hundreds -- riding cycles, motorcycles, cars, SUVs and other means of transport -- were headed to Saifai from nearby areas Tuesday morning for the final rites. In her condolence message, President Droupadi Murmu Monday de-



scribed Yadav as «Dharti Putra» - a moniker bestowed on the socialist leader for his growth as a political heavyweight from the grassroots level. «Yadav was hugely popular among the locals for his concern with the masses,» Manoj Mishra, a native of Etawah told media, reminiscing how 'Netaji' knew people of the region by their first names.

Mulayam Singh Yadav: A timeline of his life and career

Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav died in Medanta hospital of Gurugram on Monday. He was 82. Here is a timeline. **1939:** Born in Saifai village of Etawah district of Uttar Pradesh. **1967:** Entered Uttar Pradesh assembly for the first time from Ram ManoharLohia's Sanyukt Socialist Party. **1968:** Joined Bharatiya Kranti Dal of Chaudhary Charan Singh. This party merged with Sanyukt Socialist party and Bharatiya Lok Dal was formed. **1975-1977:** Bharatiya Lok Dal merged with Janata Dal. **1977:** Becomes minister for the first time. **1982-1987:** Becomes Member of Legislative Council and Leader of Opposition in the Council. **1996:** Contests Lok Sabha polls for the first time from Mainpuri, UP, and becomes Defence minister. **1998:** Becomes Lok Sabha member again from Sambhal, UP. **1999:** Becomes an MP again from Sambhal. **1980:** Becomes Lok Dal state President. **1985-87:** Becomes state president of Janata Dal. **1989-1991:** Becomes Uttar Pradesh CM first time. **1992:** Forms Samajwadi Party. **1993-95:** Becomes UP CM second time. **2003:** Became UP CM third time. **2003:** Death of wife Malti Devi, marries Sadhna Gupta. **2004:** Becomes MP from Mainpuri. **2007:** Becomes Leader of Opposition in the UP state assembly. **2009:** Becomes MP from Mainpuri. **2014:** Becomes MP from Azamgarh and Mainpuri, resigns from Mainpuri. **2019:** Becomes MP (seventh time) from Mainpuri. **2022:** Dies at Gurugram's Medanta Hospital.

Implementing Udaipur declaration my only agenda: Kharage

BHUBANESWAR: Congress presidential candidate Mallikarjun Kharage on Friday asserted that he did not have any separate poll manifesto and implementing the Udaipur declaration was his only agenda. Kharage, addressing a press conference here after meeting Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee functionaries, said he, if elected, would try and implement all that have been proposed in the declaration adopted by the party at the Chintan Shivir held in Rajasthan earlier in the year. Kharage, on his arrival here, was received by senior party leaders at the airport. «I do not have any separate election manifesto. My manifesto is the same as that of the Congress party. I will lead the party as per the decisions made at the recent Chintan Shivir held at Udaipur in Rajasthan,» he said. Six AICC expert committees -- on political affairs, organizational affairs, social justice, agriculture, economy and foreign affairs -- had given their observations at the Udaipur conclave, based on which the declaration was made, and «I will try to implement all of those observations on the ground,» he maintained. Party sources said that majority of the 428 OPCC members will vote in favour of Kharage, who is in the race against Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor.



PM condoles demise of Mulayam Singh Yadav

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday condoled Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav's demise, and said he was widely admired as a humble and grounded leader who was sensitive to people's problems. The 82-year-old Yadav passed away in Medanta hospital in Gurugram. «Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav Ji was a remarkable personality. He was widely admired as a humble and grounded leader who was sensitive to people's problems,» Modi said.

Mulayam was deeply committed to secular, socialist political traditions: Deve Gowda

Former prime minister H D Deve Gowda on Monday said Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav was deeply committed to the secular and socialist political traditions. Mulayam Singh Yadav died on Monday at a private hospital in Gurugram after prolonged illness. He was 82. The Janata Dal (Secular) supremo said he was deeply saddened by the passing away of his longtime colleague and friend.

Mulayam was icon of socialist movement: Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has condoled the demise of Samajwadi Party founder, Mulayam Singh Yadav and called him an icon of the socialist movement. He wrote a letter to Akhilesh Yadav and expressed grief. «He was a leader of high esteem who was respected by everybody irrespective of party lines.

Haryana, Punjab CMs condole Mulayam Singh Yadav's death

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Chief Minister ManoharLal Khattar and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann on Monday expressed grief over the death of Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav and said his demise is an irreparable loss to the political field. Yadav (82), former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, died on Monday at a hospital in Gurugram after prolonged illness. In a tweet, Khattar said Yadav's death is an irreparable loss to the political field.

Outsiders shouldn't be allowed to vote in J&K: Azad

FW DESK Joining the rising chorus against the outside voters in Jammu and Kashmir, Gulam Nabi Azad said on Wednesday that outsiders should not be allowed to cast votes in the union territory. «People from outside shouldn't cast their vote in the UT. Only local voters should be allowed. They can vote in their states in a sealed envelope, as per the system,» said Azad who recently floated new Democratic Azad Party. «The importance of voting in Jammu and Kashmir has been that only locals vote - be it Jammu or Kashmir.»



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal flags off 50 low-floor CNG buses

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday flagged off 50 low-floor CNG-powered cluster buses and said they will improve connectivity to the rural belts of the national capital. He also flagged off 30 Inova cars and 36 motorbikes for the enforcement wing of the Transport Department. «These vehicles will be involved in enforcing lane discipline. From April, we started the lane discipline drive,» he said at the event. According to transport department officials, this is the



first time motorcycles have been inducted in the enforcement team. This will ensure enforcement teams can enter

narrow lanes where cars cannot. Kejriwal said there will be 1,800 electric buses on the roads of Delhi by 2023, while

80 per cent of the city's fleet will be electric by 2025. The government has floated a tender for 1,500 electric buses, and by November next year, 1,800 such buses will be playing on Delhi roads, he said. «We have inducted 50 new low-floor CNG (air-conditioned) buses. From many years, people faced inconvenience since there were no buses. But in the last two-three years, electric, CNG, cluster buses have been inducted,» he added. The new buses will be kept at the new Bawana bus depot. «This will help rural

connectivity. There are already 360 cluster bus routes. There will be six new routes for these buses that will serve rural areas,» he said. Later, in a tweet in Hindi, Kejriwal said, «Today 50 new CNG buses and 66 new vehicles for road safety and bus lane enforcement were flagged off from the Rajghat depot. As many as 7,320 buses are on the roads of Delhi now, the highest-ever. By 2025, more than 10,000 buses will be in service of the people of Delhi, 80 per cent of them will be electric buses.»

Court grants bail to man in Jahangirpuri violence case



NEW DELHI: A court here has granted bail to a man accused of being part of an unlawful assembly in the Jahangirpuri violence case, saying the investigation against him was complete and the charge sheet filed. The court was hearing the bail application of Tabrej, who was charged with committing various offences under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including rioting, assault and attempt to murder, besides provisions of the Arms Act. The applicant or accused Tabrej is admitted to bail on furnishing personal bond in the sum of Rs 25,000 with one surety of like amount to the satisfaction of the court, Additional Sessions Judge Satish Kumar said. The judge noted investigation against him was complete and the charge sheet

committed to the court for trial. It will take a long time to conclude the trial and no purpose would be served to keep the accused in judicial custody, the court said. The court also noted that some of the co-accused were granted bail by the Delhi High Court and the present court. According to the prosecution, when the Hanuman Jayanti procession from EE Block in Jahangirpuri came close to Jama Masjid in C Block on April 16, 2022, a person called Ansar started an argument with the members of the procession, which resulted in stone-pelting and a stampede. The members of the unlawful assembly caused serious injuries to eight police officials, the prosecution said, adding, Tabrej was arrested on the basis of the CCTV footage of the incident.

HC quashes FIRs registered against Kumar Vishwas, Tajinderpal Bagga in separate cases



CHANDIGARH: The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday quashed two separate FIRs registered against former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas and BJP leader Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga by the Punjab Police. While Vishwas was booked by the Rupnagar Police in Punjab over his alleged inflammatory statements against AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, Bagga was booked on charges of making provocative statements, promoting enmity and criminal intimidation at Mohali in April. Senior counsel Chetal Mittal said that Justice Anoop Chitkara ordered the quashing of the FIRs. After the pronouncement of the verdict, Vishwas thanked the judiciary and admirers. In a tweet, BJP leader Bagga said, Satyamev Jayate Big slap on @ArvindKejriwal Face. Punjab High court Quashed FIR against Me & Me @DrKumarVishwas.

Dera chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim granted 40-day parole



CHANDIGARH: Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, who is serving a prison sentence in Haryana's Sunaria jail, has been granted parole for 40 days, official sources said on Friday. The move comes just ahead of the Adampur bypoll, which is scheduled to be held on November 3. The Dera chief had earlier come out of prison on a month-long parole in June. Prior to that, he was granted three weeks' furlough in February. The sect chief is serving a 20-year jail term for raping two women disciples at his ashram in Sirsa, where the Dera is headquartered. He was convicted by a special CBI court in Panchkula in August 2017. He was last year also convicted along with four others for hatching a conspiracy to kill Ranjit Singh, a Dera manager, in 2002. The Dera chief and three others were convicted in 2019 for the murder of a journalist more than 16 years ago.

SGPC questions parole to Dera Sacha Sauda chief



AMRITSAR: The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) on Friday raised an objection to 40-day parole being granted to Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim, who is serving a jail term in two rape cases. The Dera chief, who is serving his sentence in Haryana's Sunaria jail, has been granted parole for 40 days, official sources said on Friday. In a statement here, SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhali alleged while "special kindness" is being shown to Gurmeet Ram Rahim, Sikhs who are lodged in jails for three decades are not being released even after completing their sentences. He said a large number of imprisoned Sikhs have been deprived of parole. «This brings the functioning of governments under question. Such tactics for political gains are not in the interest of the country and governments should refrain from hurting Sikh sentiments,» said Dhali. The Dera chief had earlier come out of prison on a month-long parole in June. Prior to that, he was granted three weeks' furlough in February. The sect chief is serving a 20-year jail term for raping two women disciples at his ashram in Sirsa, where the Dera is headquartered. He was convicted by a special CBI court in Panchkula in August 2017.

Building collapse in Delhi: 2 more bodies recovered, toll climbs to 3

NEW DELHI: Two more bodies were pulled out from the debris of a building that collapsed in central Delhi's Lahori Gate area, taking the death toll in the incident to three, police said on Oct 10. The two-storey building collapsed on Sunday evening. While the body of a four-year-old girl was recovered on Sunday, two more bodies were pulled out later. The deceased have been identified as Khushi (4), Suleman (75) and Shagufta (70), police said. «It was a two-storey building which was very old. Due to incessant rainfall, the upper por-



tion of the building collapsed leading to further damage to the rest of the building which led to its collapse,» a senior

police officer said. «We have registered a case under sections 336 (act endangering life or personal safety of others), 337 (causing hurt by an act which endangers human life, etc.), 338 (causing grievous hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) and 304 A (causing death by negligence) of the Indian Penal Code against unidentified persons. Further investigation is underway,» the officer said. Nine people -- Amara (45), Nilofar (50), Mohd Imran (40), Sankar Begum (60), Sukhbir (34), Ankit (28), Ashok (40), Sayaid Jishan (30) and Vipin (30) -- were injured in the incident. They are undergoing treatment at the Lok Nayak Hospital, police said.

President of India Graces 52nd Convocation of Punjab Engineering College



KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh
The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, graced the 52nd convocation and closing ceremony of century year celebrations of Punjab Engineering College (PEC) in Chandigarh. Banwarilal Purohit Hon'ble Governor of Punjab and Administrator UT Chandigarh along with Bandaru Dattatraya Hon'ble Governor of Haryana and Dharam Pal (IAS) Advisor to Administrator UT Chandigarh were also present on this occasion. Rajinder Gupta Chairman Board of Governors Punjab Engineering College welcomed Hon'ble President of India and presented her a shawl. President Droupadi Murmu along with Governors of Punjab & Haryana and Gupta lit the lamp to inaugurate the convocation.

Congress leaders resign to join BJP in Haryana



SATISH HANDA
At the time when Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi holding 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' all over in the country the party has started breaking and it was shocking when party's National Convener a former MLA from Shahabad Vidhan Sabha constituency in Kurukshetra district Anil Dhantodi said good bye to Congress along with several supporters and joined BJP along with several senior Congress leaders including former Congress Committee Secretary Bhupinder Rana, former Block President at Shahabad Randhir Sulakhani, President Shahabad Brahman Sabha Ashok Vats and President Sanatan Dharam Sabha Ashok Khurana along about two dozen other senior Congress

Ambala-Kala Amb & Ambala-Mohali Green Field Expressway projects sanctioned: Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA
AMBALA: Haryana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij while addressing media persons here expressed his gratitude to the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari for sanctioning both projects installation of both Ambala-Kala Amb and Ambala-Mohali Green Field Expressways. He conveyed thanks to the Union Minister for taking full interest for approving of Ambala Ring Road to Kala Amb four laning and Ambala Mohali Roads with cost of 1183.70 Cr. Vij said that approval of Rs 1183.70 crore for Green Field Expressway from Ambala to Kala Amb and Ambala to Mohali has been given by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari which is a matter of happiness that with the construction of both the expressways, the connectivity of Ambala would be even better in future, as well as the commuters would get maximum benefit from it.

Controversial cough syrup alleged daimed life of 66 children

SATISHHANDA

Kundli (Sonapat): Delhi-based Maiden Pharmaceuticals having manufacturing unit at Kundli in Sonapat district, whose cough syrups have come under the scanner of the World Health Organization (WHO) alleged contamination and claimed life of 66 children in the West African country Gambia. WHO has raised alert on four cough syrup manufactured by the firm. The officers of drug control department Haryana conducted raid at the factory and started investigation along with Rakesh Dahija. And told that five samples of cough syrup manufactured in plant has been sent for thorough investigation to Central Laboratory Kolkata for thorough investigation as regard salts used in this drug. Meanwhile Chairman Pharma Export Promotion Council Dinesh Dua said that exporting firms are required to take good manufacturing practice certificate from WTO and the samples of goods dispatched to Gambia allege caused death of 66 innocent children consumed cough syrup will reveal the truth about use of correct salts in medicine. Meanwhile Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij expressed deep concern over the death of 66 children and said that stern action will be taken against those

responsible for deaths if found guilty. Police conducting raids for the arrest of both directors Naresh Goel and Vivek Goel went underground after unfortunate incident. The manager of company and the pharmacist of manufacturing company are also absconding. Rajiv Singhal, general secretary of the All India Organization of Chemists & Druggists (AIOCD), said the body had reached out to the company, which stated that according to company these products were only for export markets and have asked the DCGI (drug controller general of India) for directions to recall the products from Gambia. The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) has started investigation to ascertain the facts in association with the state drug controller of Haryana, where the company has its manufacturing plant. The CDSCO took up the matter immediately with the Haryana State Regulatory Authority, under whose jurisdiction the drug manufacturing unit of Maiden Pharmaceutical, Sonapat, is located, the Union Health Ministry said from the preliminary enquiry by the CDSCO, it had been found that Maiden Pharma is a manufacturer licensed by the state drug controller for products such as Promethazine Oral Solution BP, Kofexalin Baby Cough Syrup, MaKoff Baby cough syrup and MaGrip n Cold Syrup. Information reveals, the company has manufactured and exported these products only to Gambia and only report of samples sent to Central Laboratory Kolkata will reveal the truth as regard cause of death of 66 innocent children allegedly consumed cough syrup.

Justice delays in courts due to delayed reports from labs, 13308 reports pending in Haryana



SATISH HANDA
Justice usually delays in courts for a long time due to non-receipt of reports from Forensic Science Laboratories (FSL) when cases are under trial in courts and accused involved in serious crimes like murder, rape and poisoning to death remain not only in open but also delay makes case weak. According to information, 13308 forensic reports of cases under trial in courts are pending since a long time in five FSL in Haryana state which include the biggest FSL at Madhuban in Karnal district and five Regional FSL at Bhandsi in Gurugram district, Panchkula, Hisar and forensic science laboratory Rohtak. There are also large numbers of viscera report awaited in courts across the state. According to complainants, their cases remain pending in courts as well as in Fast Track Courts for a long time in the absence of such reports to be submitted by forensic laboratories in the state and they are forced to visit court against and again on hearings in the court on every date thus having delay in getting justice. Courts usually require DNA test report for identification

of victim in murder cases, for identification of victim female as well as accuse in sexually exploitation (rape and gang rape) cases and according to judges reports of such cases are usually delayed for a long time thus giving decision in these cases and in spite of several reminders action not taken by Forensic Science Laboratories usually blame shortage of staff as well as infrastructure prime reasons for the delay in such laboratories. Information reveals that 1572 DNA test reports are also pending with FSL in the state at present. Sometime ago the question for delay in submitting reports by FSL in the state was raised in Vidhan Sabha session when state government had assured relief to complainants in this regard but to no result. On the report of National Human Right Commission direction was given to bring all Forensic Science Laboratories under the control of Ministry of Home Department which are still unimplemented and these are functioning under the control of Director an officer of IPS rank in the state.

Punjab, Haryana fail to reach agreement on SYL canal row

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar failed to reach an agreement on the contentious Sutlej Yamuna Link canal during a meeting here on Friday. Though Mann called Haryana Punjab's "younger brother", he said his state does not have any water to share with the neighbouring state and the question of constructing



the canal does not arise. He said in case Haryana faces shortage of water, both Punjab and that state can approach

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and request him to arrange water from either Yamuna or Ganga or anywhere else. During the meeting at Haryana Niwas here, he also sought reassessment of water from the rivers. On the other hand, Khattar said Punjab did not agree on the construction of the SYL canal in its territory. «No consensus was arrived at in the meeting,» Khattar told reporters.

Action against adulterators serving poison instead of sweets during festival season

SATISH HANDA

Teams of CM Flying Squad in Haryana along with district food safety officer has intensified raids at sweets shops and stores selling adulterated eatables as well as foods and bakery products during current festival season. The teams collected large number of samples for sweets as well as other food products including samples of milk and milk products from milk dairies all over in the state and take stern action against those serving poison to consumers instead of sweets and other food and milk products. CM Flying Squad accompanied by Dr Praveen Malhotra and Dr Joginder Singh raided large number of milk dairies and sweets shops at Rohtak, collected three samples of milk and milk products including cheese and 'khoya' from Krishna Dairy at Janta Colony, destroyed 40 kg 'Rosogulla' having insects inside when being prepared in a factory and also destroyed 45 kg cake having fungus inside in a bak-



ery at Sukhpura Chowk and also collected large number of samples from different sweets shops and bakeries to forward the same to laboratory at Chandigarh when it will take 15 to 20 days to get report, Dr Joginder said. CM Flying Squad jointly with the staff of food safety department Rohtak collected samples of sweets, milk products from milk dairies and bakery products found unfit for use from several places in the town. Information reveals, CM Flying Squad also collected more than 175 samples in past 24 hours



during the year during 2021 only six samples were rejected and the punishment was declared by the court in five cases whose sampled were declared unfit for and against those Rs 18000 fine was imposed. Dr Rajiv Food Safety Officer Ambala told that during last Vidhan Sabha session in the

state government has directed to take stern action against adulterators, milk dairies, sweets shops in the state and those selling adulterated food and milk products should be punished severely liable for sentence up to six years and fine up to 10 lakh according to nature of crimes.

CBI charge sheet against A Raja in disproportionate assets case

NEW DELHI: The CBI has filed a charge sheet against DMK leader A Raja for allegedly amassing disproportionate assets to the tune of Rs 5.53 crore during his tenure as Union minister, officials said. In its charge sheet filed before a Special CBI court in Chennai, the agency has alleged that a close associate of Raja, C Krishnamurthy, had set up a company Kovai Shelters Promoters in January, 2007 in which a payment of Rs 4.56 crore was received in February that year from a

Gurugram-based real estate company as commission for purchase of land in Kanchipuram, they said. It is alleged that the payment was not for the land deal but a quid pro quo for giving the real estate firm the status of an infrastructure company by Raja during his tenure as Union minister, they said. In the charge sheet filed in August this year, the CBI has alleged that the company had not "undertaken any other real estate activity" other than the purported land deal for the



real estate firm. The company had later bought agricultural land in Coimbatore. The agency has alleged that that as minister

Raja had garnered assets worth Rs 5.53 crore, including the payment of Rs 4.56 crore to the company in which Raja's close relatives were directors, which he could not satisfactorily account for, they said. The CBI has alleged assets in question were disproportionate to the tune of 579 per cent from his known sources of income, they said. The agency had registered the case in 2015 against Raja and 16 others, including his nephew Parmesh, wife Parameswari, his associate

Krishnamurthy who is also director of Kovai Shelters Pvt Limited, wife of Sadiq Basha, an alleged associate of Raja who had committed suicide, and Reha Banu, a director in Greenhouse Promoters which was earlier owned by Basha among others. The CBI had booked Raja, former Telecom Minister, in connection with the 2G spectrum allocation case as well but he was acquitted by a special court as the agency failed to prove any charges of corruption against him.

Congress gets huge repose in its Karnataka leg of "Bharat Jodo Yatra"

ARUNKUMARRAO Bengaluru

As Congress chief Sonia Gandhi joined and walked beside son Rahul Gandhi two days back congress get huge response in its Karnataka leg of "Bharat Jodo Yatra". Congress is planning a huge campaign to "win over" next year's assembly election. Though Rahul Gandhi told in press conference that this yatra nothing to do with coming assembly election. The Wayanad MP (Rahul Gandhi) shared the video with a caption, "No one can stop us from uniting India. No one can stop us from raising the voice of India. No one can stop the Bharat Jodo Yatra from going from Kanyakumari to Kashmir."



Earlier on Wednesday Sonia offered vijayadashami prayers at Bheemanakoli temple in begur village in HD Kote. Party chief Sonia Gandhi, who was abroad for medical check-ups, reached Karnataka to take part in the Bharat Jodo Yatra on Monday. Sonia Gandhi flew to Maddikeri in Coorg and stayed at a private resort. Congress planned huge rally in bellari to mark the culmination of the Karnataka leg of its yatra. The Yatra will pass through Karnataka for 21 days covering 511 km in Karnataka. The yatra will include Chamarajanagar, Mysuru, Mandya, Tumakuru, Chitradurga, Ballari and Raichur districts. As per scheduled plan of The

Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra will cover 3,570 km in 150 days. It started from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu on September 7 and will conclude in Jammu and Kashmir. During the yatra Rahul Gandhi interacted with representative of many education institutions and teachers, he also responded by categorically stating that there was no intention to making hindi along the national language. He also said during interaction that the new NEP 2020 had been specifically created to reverse everything done over the previous 75 years. He went on to say that the only goals driving these enormous changes implemented by the State and Central Governments were commercialization. He said, there were numerous purposeful and planned attempts to undermine the Constitution and the educational system by these extreme tactics. On Saturday 31st day of Yatra at Thurvekere in tumku-

Addressing a press conference on Saturday, He responded to a question about party president candidate, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that "neither of the candidates contesting for the post of Congress President will run the party on "remote control". "Both the people who are standing have a position, a perspective, and are people of stature and understanding. I don't think either of them is going to be a remote control, and frankly this tone is insulting to both of them," he said. when asked about the recent ban on the PFI, He said "My view is that it doesn't matter who the person spreading hatred is, it doesn't matter which community they come from, spreading hatred and violence is an anti-national act and we'll fight against such people." At Tumkur local leader G Parameshwara joined yatra with Rahul Gandhi and People across villages, towns and cities has shown massive support for Yatra.

Mig 29K develops technical snag, pilot ejects safely



GOA: A Mig 29K fighter jet of the Indian Navy developed a technical malfunction while returning to a base in Goa on Wednesday morning and the pilot ejected safely, officials said. The aircraft was on a routine sortie over the sea off Goa. The pilot ejected safely and has been recovered in a swift search and rescue operation, officials said. The pilot is reported to be in a stable condition. A Board of Inquiry (BoI) has been ordered to investigate the cause of the incident.

'Jana Sankalp Yatra' kicks off from Raichur by Karnataka BJP

ARUNKUMARRAO Bengaluru

The ruling Karnataka Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of B S Yediyurappa and chief Minister basavaraj Bommai "Jana Sankalp Yatra" flagged off from Raichur, Karnataka on Tuesday. Over the next three months, the duo will shuttle in a helicopter to various destinations on the tour. "In all, both leaders will tour around 110 assembly constituencies till mid of December with breaks in between" according to the state BJP. Schedule for the janasankalpayatra tour was finalised by both Bommai and Yediyurappa along with state BJP president Nalinkumarkateel



during the last week BJP's executive committee meeting held in Bengaluru. Bommai said, the party's janasankalpayatra and rallies are not a reaction to the Bharat Jodo Yatra but "had been planned long ago". During their tour, the duo along with local leaders, BJP office-bearers interact with

and programmes of the BJP led NDA Government in the Centre as well as the future policies keeping in view the interest of all the communities and ways to take benefits of the same," Bommai said. The tour assumes significance as Yediyurappa is involving himself in party work for the first time after he became a member of the all-important BJP Parliamentary Board. According to sources schedule of yatra the party will hold SC Morcha rally in Mysuru on OCT-16, OBC Morcha in Kalburgi on OCT 30, Farmer rally in Hubballi on NOV 27, Mahila Morcha in Bengaluru on Dec 25th and Minority Morcha in Vijayapura on Jan 8.

beneficiaries of state and central government schemes and programmes. They will also visit houses of people belonging to SC and ST communities. Through the rally, the people will be explained about the schemes launched by the State government, benefits to lakhs of people through the policies

PM Modi likely to visit Kedarnath-Badrinath on October 21



GOPESHWAR: The district administration has started its preparations for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Badrinath and Kedarnath temples ahead of Diwali on October 21. Though officials were tight-lipped about the prime minister's proposed visit to the Himalayan temples, sources said he would offer prayers at the temples and review the reconstruction projects underway there. The prime minister would first visit Kedarnath where he will perform a puja and assess the ongoing work there. He will then pay obeisance at Badrinath Temple and review the projects taken up under the Badrinath master plan, the sources said.

ED chargesheet journalist Rana Ayyub in money laundering case

ED case is based on an FIR by the Uttar Pradesh Police last year where it was alleged that Rana Ayyub collected huge funds through Ketto, an online crowd funding platform, in the name of relief work but diverted the funds. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday filed a prosecution complaint—equivalent to a charge sheet—against journalist Rana Ayyub in connection with its money laundering probe into alleged irregularities in funds collected by her for relief work. The ED case is based on an FIR by the Uttar Pradesh Police last year where it was alleged that Ayyub collected huge funds through Ketto, an online crowd funding platform, in the name of relief work but diverted the funds. In February, the agency had attached bank deposits to the tune of Rs 1.77 crore belonging to Ayyub in connection with the case. She had also been prevented from flying abroad in March based on a lookout circular issued by ED. "Investigations conducted by Directorate of Enforcement make



it abundantly clear that the funds were raised in the name of charity in a completely pre-planned and systematic manner and the funds were not utilized completely for the purpose of which the funds were raised," the ED had said in a statement then. According to ED, its investigations disclosed that instead of utilising the funds for the relief work, Ayyub parked some of it by opening a separate current bank account. "Ms. Rana Ayyub also created a Fixed Deposit of Rs. 50 Lakh from the funds raised on Ketto and subsequently did not utilize these for relief works. She deposited a total of Rs 74.50 lakhs in PM Cares fund and CM Relief Fund," the ED said in a statement. "Accordingly, at the stage

of the investigation, the proceeds of crime are quantified as Rs. 1,77,27,704/- and the interest generated upon the said FD of Rs. 50 Lakh," the statement added. The money attached by ED is in the form of bank deposits in three different bank accounts. The UP police FIR against Ayyub was registered in September last year at the Indirapuram police station in Ghaziabad based on a complaint by Vikas Sankrityayan. Apart from sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and of the IT Act, the police had also invoked Section 4 of the Black Money Act alleging she had illegally acquired money from the general public in the name of charity. According to ED, the FIR discloses that Ayyub raised huge amounts running into crores of rupees via Ketto in three campaigns—funds for slum dwellers and farmers during April-May 2020; relief work for Assam, Bihar, and Maharashtra from June to September 2020, and help for Covid-19 impacted people in India during May-June 2021.

India already achieved its target of 40% power generation from green sources: Sudhanshu Trivedi

NEW DELHI: Infrastructure and energy are important pillars in our journey towards becoming a developed country. The government is emphasizing on developing non-fossil fuel energy and solar energy has already taken a quantum jump. We have achieved our target of 40% of power generation from green sources as per the 2016 Paris Climate Accords well ahead of time, said Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi, MP Rajya Sabha and Member, Standing Committee on Energy said at the 2-day summit organized by ASSOCHAM on International Energy.



summit organized by ASSOCHAM on International Energy. "We are now the 5th largest economy in the world. Estimates are that by 2027 we may surpass Germany and by 2029 we may surpass Japan to become the 3rd largest economy. The target now is to become a developed nation by 2047, development of green energy and the transition towards green economy will be an important factor towards achieving that goal" he added. Delivering the opening remarks, Sumant Sinha, President ASSOCHAM and Chairman and CEO Renew Power said, "It's no secret that India has been terrific in creating a green economy."

Modi to chair CSIR Society meeting on Saturday

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Society here on Saturday. During a press conference, Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said this is the third year of the CSIR Society and the meeting is of special significance as it marks 80 years of the establishment of the council.

front of the prime minister and his suggestions would be sought on the way forward. The meeting would also see participation from Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, 13 secretaries of Union ministries, including all secretaries of science-based ministries. CMDs of four public sector undertakings, NTPC, BHEL, GAIL and HAL, three industry leaders and 12 academia and scientific community members would also participate in the meeting.

Sustainable future call for reduced reliance on fossil fuels & electric mobility offers a safer and cleaner alternative: V.K. Singh

NEW DELHI: The future and sustainability that we talk of, lies in ensuring reduced consumption of fossil fuels. Electric mobility stands out as the safer, cleaner and better alternative. Under the AtmaNirbhar Bharat initiative, we have been incentivizing work on finding an alternative. We have made significant progress in hydrogen technology and our hydrogen cell technology will be the cheapest source of energy when it enters the market, said General (Dr.) V.K.

Singh, Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways and Civil Aviation at the ASSOCHAM event. "We need to put our heads together. The answer does not lie in looking at solutions outside the country as our problems are unique. We must work on developing the ecosystem, nothing can come up in isolation. We have the capability, the market for e-mobility is taking off globally. The earlier we start realizing our capabilities, the better it is for us."

Rahul can never be on par with Modi: Shobha Karandlaje



MANGALURU: Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shobha Karandlaje on Friday said Rahul Gandhi can never attain the stature of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Addressing reporters in Udipi, Karandlaje said the Bharat Jodo Yatra undertaken by Rahul Gandhi shows only his physical fitness. Can he lead the country? The dream of Rahul coming on par with Narendra Modi will never be realised. The union minister said the people of India will decide whether Rahul Gandhi has the mental fitness to rule the country. On the Supreme Court's split verdict on the hijab ban in Karnataka, she said the issue is likely to be handed over to the Constitution bench. She said Muslim girls should think seriously about the hijab issue and fight for their freedom. The headscarf is being forced on them by men, she said and asked Muslim girls not to dance to the tunes of men.

Need for intensified efforts towards increasing productivity & linking agriculture with the market, says Tomar

UNION MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE SPOKE AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY ASSOCHAM

FW DESK New Delhi

Speaking at a national conference focused on agricultural productivity today, Hon'ble Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said that the agriculture sector is important for food security and hence, there is a need to increase its productivity and to make efforts to connect it with maximum markets. Tomar said that the agriculture sector is the backbone of the economy. He said, "During the COVID epidemic, our agriculture has shown that it can provide a strong support to the country even in adverse conditions. It has not only been able to meet the food requirements of our country but met the needs of other friendly countries." The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare addressed the concluding session of a national conference today virtually and it was based

on the theme: Enhancing Agricultural Productivity: Integration of Improved Seeds & Agri Inputs. The conference, which was organized by the country's leading industry body, Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industries (ASSOCHAM).

Tomar said that the government is starting to assess the yield of agriculture in a digital way. He said, "It usually happens that when the price of any agricultural produce is high in the market, most of the farmers start producing the same agricultural produce. The results of this comes lowering of the prices of that produce and it leaves the farmers feeling disheartened. To avoid this situation, the government has emphasized on the Digital Agriculture Mission, so that the farming done in different areas can be assessed through new technology. This way all the information will be collected through satellite and agriculture will be monitored."

The Agriculture Minister also drew the attention of the people present at the conference towards organic farming. He said that organically-produced agricultural products are preferred all over the world. Such agricultural products have been exported from the country, however further work is needed in this area. "All relevant parties need to work together to ensure that agriculture is linked to



the market and sustain the increase in productivity." He also said that since farmers, especially the smaller ones, suffer losses due to unseasonal rains, the government has provided crop insurance cover to support them in such a situation. So far, an insurance claim of Rs 1,22,000 crore has been made available under crop insurance. However, he added, it does not compensate for the hard work put in by the farmer, so the challenge also needs to be considered.

The Agriculture Minister informed that other challenges that farmers encounter include fluctuations in the price of agricultural produce and the distance between agriculture and the market. He revealed that steps have been taken towards finding solutions for them. The government has linked 1,000 agricultural mandis with the National Agriculture Market (eNAM) project, which includes farmers and

traders among others. Tomar said that since the number of small farmers is more, the government has formed Farmer Producer Organization (FPO), where a provision of Rs 6,835 crore has been made in the budget. "Farmers should cultivate together, improve the quality, get good prices and process their products. With this, even small industries can be set up in the village."

The government is working closely with agricultural scientists and other experts to increase the productivity of agriculture and has started the Oil Palm Mission with an investment of Rs 11,000 crore. A provision of Rs 1 lakh crore has been made for setting up the infrastructure and facilities related to agriculture from village to village. Deepak Sood, Secretary General, ASSOCHAM stated that self-sufficient agriculture is of utmost importance to us.

Bharathi Cement opens first-of-its-kind fully-automated Cement Terminal



COIMBATORE: Bharathi Cement Corporation Pvt. Ltd., a group company of VICAT France, inaugurated its 0.75 MTPA bulk cement terminal in Coimbatore on 10th Oct'22 to serve the major market of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The terminal was inaugurated by Guy Sidos, VICAT Group Chairman and CEO in the presence of Anoop Kumar Saxena, CEO-VICAT INDIA, and M Ravinder Reddy, Director Marketing. To strengthen the Southern market strategy, with the start of the new terminal, the company has also launched a new product, QUICKCEM that will cater particularly to the precast and hollow block segment in the respective states.

QUICKCEM is one of the best superior quality new generation green cement and therefore falls under the premium category. The product is manufactured using the best limestone available in South India with optimum fineness and with a low percentage of Alkalies, chlorides, and magnesia which ensures better durability of the concrete structures. Due to the development of high early compressive strength, QUICKCEM provides a lesser de-shuttering period, high early compressive strength of concrete, and results in saving cement consumption. This newly launched product will be packed in a BOPP bag to deliver dust free bags to customers.

Govt must pay heed to the IMF's warning

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest World Economic Outlook report, has retained global growth hopes for 2022 at 3.2%, and lowered next year's projection to 2.7% from 2.9%. The year 2023 will feel like a recession for many people in the world, the Fund has cautioned, as 'the worst is yet to come' amid tighter monetary policies to curb stubbornly high inflation and a spiralling energy and food crisis. While it retained India's 2023-24 growth estimate at 6.1%, the IMF slashed this year's forecast to 6.8%, from 7.4% in July. This is the second significant estimate after the World Bank's 6.5% assessment that pegs India's GDP rise below 7%, which the Reserve Bank of India and North Block mandarins are expecting this year. The downgrade is attributed to 'weaker than expected outturn' in the second quarter and subdued external demand. The slowing growth in tax collections, industrial output and exports, back this prognosis. The road ahead — rendered tortuous by the lingering Russia-Ukraine conflict, a slowdown in China and what the IMF has eloquently termed a 'cost of living crisis' — is not much travelled on. The risk of monetary, fiscal or financial policy miscalibration has risen sharply amid high uncertainty and growing fragilities, the Fund has emphasised. Given India's low per capita income, the sustained surge in prices has hit most households' spending capacity, and could even cramp their ability to invest in the next generation's education. Ministers' assertions that India had managed to rein in inflation and it is not a priority concern may have been premature as August and September witnessed a resurgence in price rise from July's minor relief of 6.71% after staying above 7% in the first quarter. The Government has begun work on Budget 2023-24, but the second half of this year still needs to be navigated deftly.

LETTERBOX

Readers' feedback adds value to the newspaper. Please email comments on reports, features and columns to fwletters@gmail.com. We will publish them on this page.



RANGANATH TANNIR HIGHLIGHTS SOME OF THE NECESSARY STEPS THE GOVT NEEDS TO TAKE BESIDES BOOSTING 'ATMANIRBHARTA'

The war against illegal goods



India's wholesale inflation rate has been declining since July this year but has remained in double digits since April 2021. Last month, the inflation rate was recorded at 12.41%, from 13.93% in July. Consistently high inflation leads to people deferring purchases, purchasing less, going in for reuse and recycling, or just switching to cheaper alternatives. The search for cheaper alternatives kicks up a storm — markets are flooded with cheap inferior goods or spurious and fake brands, giving a dream run to the parallel economy players.

This is where the China angle comes in. The parallel economy dealers need access to seemingly similar functioning cheaper goods which are aptly served by factories humming in China. As we get closer to the festive season, we will see, yet again, bazaars full of Chinese goods — from Deepavali lights, pooja idols, electronic items and bicycles to everything that the consumer needs. Clearly, the Government's response to this situation is centered around its self-reliance or 'Atmanirbharta' agenda, which should place added focus on producing goods in bulk at the lowest possible cost. The Government's intent is certainly taking shape, as was echoed by Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution and Textiles, in a tweet recently. He said: "Our toy manufacturing sector is booming, with Indian toys rapidly filling up shelves in the country and abroad." Such wins would be possible only if India can bring down the cost of manufacturing by addressing anomalies at each stage in the value chain.

The consumer's search for cheaper alternatives gives birth to another menace which hurts even more — a booming, smuggled and illegal goods market. This hurts more because it is done at the cost of taxes to the government, depriving the country of the fuel required to drive social transformation. In this economic activity, the target is not the cheaper category of goods, but rather the more expensive class

of goods. According to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) — one of the best-known data sources for information on smuggling — the illicit market is thriving in five key Indian industries. This includes mobile phones, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) — household and personal goods, FMCG-packaged foods, tobacco products, and alcoholic beverages. The size of the illicit market in these industries was valued at Rs 2,60,094 crore in 2019-20.

According to a report by the Economist Intelligence Unit, in 2018 India ranked low in the Global Illicit Trade Environment Index and needed quantifiable actions to bring down the risks of illicit trade on the economy. In relation to three of the four elements, i.e., government policy, supply and demand, and customs environment, India ranks in the third quartile of the 82 countries covered in the index. It ranks 35 in terms of transparency and trade.

The CASCADE report estimates that unlawful trade in the industries mentioned above results in a total estimated legitimate employment loss of 15.96 lakh. The combined FMCG industry (household and personal goods, and packaged foods),

due to its illicit market size, accounts for about 68% of job losses. The estimated tax loss to the Government due to illicit goods in these industries has been estimated to be Rs 58,521 crore. The report further reveals that two highly regulated and taxed industries, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, account for 49% of the overall tax loss to the Government.

A lesser-known fact is that the more evolved manufacturing markets subtly support smuggling by only doing lip service and not taking strong action against their exporters and international traders as it does not harm their local economy but helps their manufacturing sector. Therefore, there have been fewer supporters in the developed world and in countries such as China for the war against smuggling. This is India's fight as it is one of the largest consuming countries with porous borders and a weak enforcement machinery to stop smuggling.

The only practical measure to stop smuggling and illicit trade is if the Government keeps taxes rationalised in the categories where smuggling is high, so as to give lesser cost arbitrage incentive to smugglers as well as aggressively promote local industry to build world-class brands and products. This would reduce the dependence on international manufacturers. There is a

common thread in both cases — the need to support local industry by rationalising taxes and providing incentives to local manufacturers so they can make world-class goods that can compete with global brands in India as well as in global markets. Allowing global brands to manufacture in India also remains relevant provided they can offer India-specific pricing and are not allowed to remit royalties and profits out of the country earned from goods being consumed by Indians. China has a very successful policy wherein multinational corporations (MNC) reinvest profits earned by subsidiaries in China. India can make a concession by allowing MNCs to repatriate profits earned from the goods they sell outside India. This will propel India as a global manufacturing destination and MNCs will be able to hit their topline goals. Today, with India's growing heft and attraction as a fast-growing economy, it is time to strike a better bargain.

Fast collective action using a mix of strategies that are rooted in smart taxation, restrictions on profit repatriation and stricter law enforcement are steps that will stop the inflow of smuggled, illicit and cheap, low-quality goods into the country. According to CASCADE, enforcement can be improved by using cutting-edge technology such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and location technology. This will help in increasing the seizure of illegal goods. The Government must also increase consumer awareness so that people boycott smuggled, counterfeit and poor quality goods. The supply of cheap, counterfeit and smuggled goods is only nurturing crime syndicates and a parallel economy, and where the Government and the consumer are the losers. There is no better time than now to give 'Atmanirbharta' yet another dimension to accelerate its progress.

Ranganath Tannir is Secretary General, Think Change Forum, a think-tank based in New Delhi. Views are personal.



MUKUL SANWAL SAYS INDIA'S PRESIDENCY OF THE G20, SCO AND UNSC IS A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR REINVENTING THE UN

The coalition of the world



The League of Nations, set up in 1920, was the first intergovernmental organisation with the aim to promote international cooperation and outlived its utility with World War II. The United Nations claims to be the one place where all the world's nations can discuss common problems and find shared solutions that benefit all of humanity. Now, 75 years later, rising conflict situations suggest it is time to go back to first principles of the Charter.

The United Nations Secretary General (UNSG), António Guterres, made a candid assessment of global governance. He addressed the United Nations General Assembly and said the "world is in big trouble", "gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction", even the "G20 is in the trap of geopolitical divides". "In a splintering world, we need to create mechanisms of dialogue to heal divides" and "only by acting as one, we can nurture fragile shoots of hope" for a "coalition of the world". This is a call for fresh thinking.

India's Presidency of the Group of 20, UN Security Council (UNSC) in 2022, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2023 when major powers are not even talking to each other and India alone, now the fifth largest economy, is interacting with each of them, presents a historic opportunity.

The gridlock does not flow from bilateral relations but from the way international cooperation is being re-defined.

First, multilateralism is under challenge even by its proponent, with the United States opting for partnerships, with the most important areas being the worst

affected. The G7 Summit, held in June, endorsed the goals of a cooperative international Climate Club to accelerate climate action outside the UN. The dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO without the quorum of its members has rendered the institution dysfunctional. Despite the G7 having accepted the need for transfer of funds at Rio in 1992, because of their role in creating the climate crisis, the promise made in 2009 to provide at least \$100 billion per year in climate finance remains unfulfilled.

Second, China has opted for rival set of multilateral institutions. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) seeks to achieve policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity by building a new platform for international cooperation to create "new drivers of shared development", and covers half the world population with one-third the GDP and investment of \$930 billion. China's Global

Development Initiative, 2021, and linked Global Security Initiative, 2022, is developing a conceptual frame responding to an urbanising world, i.e. digital governance and non-traditional security, which the international system has not covered.

Third, more significant than the clash of institutions reflecting the deepening divide between the Atlantic powers and the Russia-China combine is the diffusion of wealth, technology and power. The 'rest', despite threats, are now capable of not taking sides and are looking for leadership within the United Nations, for what the UNSG characterised as "coalition of the world".

India will chair the Security Council in December, and will have the Presidency of the G20 and the SCO.

Strategists in major powers see the world in binary terms around rules. In a multipolar world, the question is the kind of rules needed for human wellbeing and whether principles would serve the purpose better.

Second, the time is ripe for a 'big idea' that both keeps away from the current multilateral focus on global rules, amount of aid and inviolability of IPR's as well as recognises a role for competing institutions as countries can now secure the best terms themselves without bargaining.

Third, just as the 'Rio principles' continue to guide climate change, *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, or 'world as one family', focusing on comparable levels of wellbeing can be the core of a set of universal socio-economic principles for a dialogue between the states.

Fourth, to the current global consensus around equitable sustainable development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has added a clearer societal purpose to flesh out a universal civilisational principle. He emphasised 'Lifestyle for Environment' seeing climate change as a societal process and combating it devoid of trade-offs characteristic of the Climate Treaty. He has also offered India's payments and linked digital ID technology without IPR restrictions.

Fifth, redefining 'common concerns' in terms of felt needs of the majority rather than interests and concerns of the powerful will shift the focus of a much slimmed down United Nations squarely to human wellbeing, and not as an add-on.

India's Presidential statement could introduce *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* in the UNSC in December. The SCO Summit will precede the G20 Summit and acceptance of overarching principles will support acceptance by the wider G20.

Mukul Sanwal is a former UN diplomat. Views are personal.

BOOKS: REVIEW

Book reproduces hunter's unpublished letters, papers

A new book, "The Corbett Papers", has brought together lesser known parts of the famous naturalist-hunter Jim Corbett's life through unpublished letters, documents and a privately-published book.

Published by Hachette India, the book has been co-edited by educator Akshay Shah and writer Stephen Alter.

Corbett, born in Nainital in 1875, was known for tracking and hunting down a number of man-eating tigers and leopards in different parts of North India. The annals of his adventures were written by him in a series of books, the most famous of which is "Man-Eaters of Kumaon" (1944).

He also played an important role in establishing Hailey National Park, India's first national park in 1936. It was later named after the naturalist in 1956, a year after his death.

According to the publishing house, the entire text of a privately published and long vanished book, "Jungle Stories", is reproduced in the latest book, along with papers that Corbett's first biographer, DC Kala, acquired during his research.

The book was written and printed by Corbett for a small group of friends in Nainital with only a hundred copies that never went into commercial circulation and disappeared with time.

Alter contributed the complete text of Corbett's first book, "Jungle

'DC Kala's writings from the mid-1950s describing what is now the Corbett Park appear here too, as do extracts from 'Memoirs of the Raj' by GR Kala, a government official and contemporary of Corbett posted in the Kumaon regions where the hunter was most active'

Stories", which was self-published in Nainital in 1935.

"The Corbett Papers" also includes the unpublished reminiscences of Corbett by his sister Maggie, and rare extracts from a forgotten work, "The Taming of the Jungle", by his half-brother



The Corbett Papers
Edited by Akshay Shah & Stephen Alter
Hachette India
264 pages, Rs699

Charles Doyle.

"DC Kala's writings from the mid-1950s describing what is now the Corbett Park appear here too, as do extracts from 'Memoirs of the Raj' by GR Kala, a government official and contemporary of Corbett posted in the Kumaon regions where the hunter was most active," the publishers said.

The full text of Corbett's last will and testament is also reproduced, affording new insights into his character and state of mind at the end of his life.

"The Corbett Papers" is currently available for sale across

offline and online stores.

Jim Corbett, the famous naturalist-hunter, wrote a series of bestsellers about his experiences with wildlife in the jungles of North India. *Man-Eaters of Kumaon* (1944), his first book, has sold more than 4 million copies. Few people know that some of the stories in that book were earlier published in a slender volume titled *Jungle Stories*, only a hundred copies of which were printed by Corbett for friends in his hometown, Nainital. The entire text of this privately published and long vanished book is reproduced here, along with papers that Corbett's first biographer, D.C. Kala, acquired during his research.

The *Corbett Papers* also includes the unpublished reminiscences of Jim by his sister Maggie, and rare extracts from a forgotten work, *The Taming of the Jungle*, by Corbett's half-brother Charles Doyle.

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THE FINANCIAL WORLD

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Wipro announces Q2 financial results for the quarter ended sept 30, 2022

ARUNKUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Wipro, leading technology services and consulting company, announced a Net Income of Rs 26.6 billion and Earnings Per Share of Rs 4.86, for the quarter ended September 30, 2022. As per the financial results for Q2 announced on Wednesday during the pressconference at Wipro campus, IT Services Segment Revenue was at \$2,797.7 million, an increase of 8.4 per cent YoY and reported a 9.3 per cent drop in its September quarter net profit, weighed down by rising staff expenses and lower non-US earnings.

"The solid growth in our bookings, large deal signings, and revenues underscores our improved market competitive-



ness and enhanced value proposition," said Thierry Delaporte, CEO and Managing Director in his address. Profit attributable to equity shareholders of the company was 9.3 per cent lower at Rs 2,659 crore. Our ongoing investments in high-growth strategic areas have allowed us to steadily increase out win

rate and enhance the quality of our pipeline. We continue to invest in and upskill our talents to stay ahead of our clients evolving needs. We promoted more than 10,000 colleagues and increased salaries across bands he added.

Jatin Dalal, Chief Financial Officer, said, "We achieved mar-

HIGH LIGHT OF THE RESULTS

- ❑ Gross Revenue was rs 225.4 billion (\$ 2.8 Billion) , an increase of 14.6% YOY.
- ❑ IT Services Segment Revenue was at \$2,797.7 million, an increase of 8.4% YOY
- ❑ IT services operating Margin for the quarter was 15.1%, an increase of 16 bps QoQ.
- ❑ Company closing Employee count in IT Services increased to 259,179.
- ❑ Company top 5 clients grew 19% YOY and top 10 clients grew 17% YOY in constant currency terms.

gins of 15.1 per cent in Q2 after absorbing the impact of salary increases and promotions". He said, "Our margin improvement was led by better price realisations and strong operational improvements in automation-led productivity. Our Operating

Cash Flows was robust and at 181 per cent of our net income for the year." However The attrition rate marginally dropped to 23 per cent in Q2, from 23.3 per cent in the preceding quarter. Hiring was at a slower pace for the quarter, he added.

India's 5G is indigenous; can provide to other countries as well, says Nirmala Sitharaman



WASHINGTON: India has launched its indigenously developed 5G infrastructure and is ready to share it with other countries as well, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Thursday.

The story (of India's 5G) is yet to reach the public, Sitharaman said in her interaction with students at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

The 5G that we've launched in our country is completely standalone, she said in response to a question.

There could be some parts coming from, say, countries like (South) Korea, but (not) coming from somebody else. So complete indigenous technology that we can now provide 5G (to any country) who wants it, she said.

So, our 5G is not imported from somewhere else. It's our own product, Sitharaman said.

Exports rise 4.82 % to USD 35.45 bn in Sep

NEW DELHI: India's exports rose by 4.82% to USD 35.45 billion in September, even as the trade deficit widens to USD 25.71 billion, according to the data released by the commerce ministry on Friday. In its preliminary data, which was released in the first week of this month, the ministry stated that the country's merchandise exports contracted by 3.52 per cent to USD 32.62 billion in September. Imports during the month under review increased by 8.66 per cent to USD 61.61 billion. The trade deficit in September 2022 was USD 22.47 billion. During April-September 2022, exports recorded a growth of 16.96 per cent to USD 231.88 billion. Imports rose by 38.55 per cent to USD 380.34 billion, while the trade deficit widened to USD 148.46 billion against USD 76.25 billion in September 2021, the data showed.

Torry Harris is a 2022 Banking Tech Awards Finalist

Torry Harris Integration Solutions (THIS), a recognized leader in integration strategy and API-driven digital transformation delivery, today announced selection as a finalist in this year's Fintech Futures Banking Tech Awards. Torry Harris' banking solution Concierge Bank has been chosen as a finalist in the category 'Best Open Banking Solution International' along with NTT Data's Plateau Banking and Infosys' Fincade. Concierge Bank, a marketplace-banking product by Torry Harris, is helping banks worldwide offer customers innovative new products through an open API-driven marketplace solution and a simple user interface.

Punjab secures another investment in IT Sector through TestingXperts

FW DESK
Chandigarh/Mohali

Touted as the world's fifth largest pure-play Quality Assurance and Software Testing Company (source: NelsonHall), TestingXperts

has announced that it will open a state-of-the-art Innovation and Delivery Centre at Mohali in Punjab generating direct employment for 3,000 people and indirect employment of over 5,000 people with an investment of \$20 million.

TestingXperts has laid the foundation for one of the largest state-of-the-art buildings in IT City, Mohali. Spread over 2.17 acres with 300,000 sqft of planned office space, this will be TestingXperts' second office in Tricity after its Chandigarh office in IT Park.



"With establishment of this office, TestingXperts will drive enormous opportunities in the Mohali and Tricity for software professionals, by adding 3,000+ professionals in addition to the existing workforce of 1,000+," said Manish Gupta, Founder and CEO, TestingXperts.

The tech ecosystem in Punjab is undergoing a massive shift with the government focusing on creating a technologically charged ecosystem and func-

tion as a catalyst in building, empowering and supporting the business environment. The 'Invest Punjab' initiative has ensured more investors and ease of business in the State leading to investments in the IT and Electronics Sector to the tune of Rs. 770 crore in the financial year 2021-22, an increase of nearly 67% over the previous financial year.

Principal Secretary, Department of Investment Promotion,

Information Technology and Industries, Punjab, Dilip Kumar IAS shared that with continued proactive marketing efforts and effective policy advocacy by Invest Punjab team, another major investment has been registered by world renowned IT company TestingXperts in IT city Mohali with an investment of Rs 160 Cr in a phased manner.

TestingXperts has been growing at a consistent growth of 50% over the span of the last 5 years and is poised to grow to \$200 million revenue in the next 5 years. Being an innovation led company, it invests 5% of its annual revenue on building new innovative solutions and products with a motive to help companies save on QA costs and Go to Market faster with new and updated features.

Infosys Q2 results: Profit rises 11% to Rs 6,021 cr, board okays Rs 9,300 cr share buyback

ARUNKUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Infosys, India's second-largest IT services company, a consolidated net profit of Rs 6,021 for the quarter ended Sept 30, 2022, company announced during pressconference at Infosys campus in Bengaluru. Whereas Revenue from operations stood at Rs 36,538 crore, with 23.4 per cent growth over Rs 29,602 crore in the Q2FY22. Sequentially, revenue grew 6 per cent while net profit rose 12.3 per cent over the previous quarter.

The company also said it will be buying back shares worth Rs 9,300 crore, in order to reward its shareholders with company set the maximum buyback price at Rs1,850, a premium 30 per cent over the last closing price. The Board of Infosys also announced an



interim dividend of Rs 16.50 per share, an of 10 per cent over the FY22 interim dividend. The total amount of the interim dividend will be about Rs 6,940 crore. When asked with some of share holders comments they said buy back share is very attractive and happy with company interim dividend and overall good financial results they said.

Salil Parekh, CEO and Managing Director, Infosys said "Our strong large deal wins and steady all-round growth in Q2 reflect the deep relevance and differentiation of our digital and cloud solu-

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ❑ Revenues in CC terms grew by 18.8% YOY and 4.0% QoQ.
- ❑ Reported revenues at Rs 36,538 crore, growth of 23.4% YoY.
- ❑ Digital revenues at 61.8% of total revenues, YoY CC growth of 31.2%.
- ❑ Operating margin at 21.5%, decline of 2.1% YoY and increase of 1.4% QoQ.
- ❑ Basic EPS at Rs 14.35, growth of 11.5% YoY.
- ❑ FCF at Rs 4,752 crore, decline of 9.9% YoY; FCF conversion at 78.9 of net profit.

tions for clients as they navigate their business transformation".

Infosys shares jump nearly 5 pc after earnings announcement

Shares of Infosys climbed nearly 5 per cent in morning trade on Friday, after the company posted better-than-expected 11 per cent rise in consolidated net profit for the September quarter and announced buyback of shares.

The stock jumped 4.78 per cent to Rs 1,487.70 on the BSE.

At the NSE, it climbed 4.58 per cent to Rs 1,485.

Other IT stocks like HCL Technologies, Wipro and Tech Mahindra were also quoting higher.

The 30-share BSE index was trading 1,040.65 points or 1.82 per cent higher at 58,275.98 in morning trade.

India's second largest IT services company Infosys on Thursday posted a better-than-expected 11 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 6,021 crore for the September quarter and

announced buyback of shares worth Rs 9,300 crore.

The Bengaluru-headquartered company raised its FY23 revenue growth guidance to 15-16 per cent, pushing the forecast towards the higher end of previously-projected 14-16 per cent band, buoyed by "strong large deals pipeline" and good demand momentum despite global macroeconomic concerns.

"An important takeaway from IT results announced so far is that the segment is doing well and the management commentary is optimistic," according to V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Infosys board has also declared an interim dividend of Rs 16.50 per share. The interim dividend payout will be about Rs 6,940 crore, the company said in a statement.

Infosys -- which competes with Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, HCL Technologies on outsourcing contracts -- reported an 11 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit for the second quarter ended September 2022 at Rs 6,021 crore.

The revenue rose 23.4 per cent year-on-year to Rs 36,538 crore in the second quarter ended September.

The company has announced share buyback worth Rs 9,300 crore via open market route, for a price of up to Rs 1,850 per equity share. The buyback price is 30 per cent higher than the scrip closing price of Rs 1,419.7 apiece on Thursday. Share buyback is seen as an alternative, tax-efficient way to return money to shareholders.

INPUT FROM AGENCIES

Vistara to start Pune-Singapore flights from Dec 2



NEW DELHI: Full-service carrier Vistara on Friday said it will start services between Pune and Singapore from December 2.

The airline will also commence daily services between Mumbai and Kathmandu from November 15.

There will be 4x weekly flights between Pune and Singapore, starting December 2, 2022. The airline will operate its state-of-the-art A321 neo aircraft with a three-class configuration on the route, according to a release.

Currently, Vistara, a joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines, flies to 11 destinations. It has a fleet of 53 aircraft, including 41 A320s, 5 A321 neos, 5 Boeing 737-800 NGs and 2 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners.

"We are very excited to be able to launch the long-awaited connection between Pune and Singapore. Singapore is a key market for business and leisure travel from various points in India and we are glad that the new route will offer enhanced connectivity to our customers," Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan said.

Liquor mafias next target after drug smugglers under Bulldozer campaign in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

After demolishing large number of residential and commercial buildings illegally owned by drug smugglers, gangsters and hard core criminals and many more under the process of demolishing under Bulldozer campaign in Haryana, now the buildings belonging to liquor mafias are the next target to be demolished under the same campaign by ruling

state government for which a list such buildings has already been compiled by the government. Information reveals, most of their buildings have been constructed illegally on government land.

Recently, on Tuesday police teams from Kharoda police station, CIA Staff-I Sonapat, Municipal Committee along with duty magistrate arrived along with several bulldozers and demolished two highly controversial



during year 2020 when lock down was declared in the state by the government big godowns illegally built at Kharkhoda by-

pass owned by a liquor smuggler Bhupinder a resident of Chandigarh having nearly 18 criminal cases allegedly smuggling liquor registered against him at Sonapat, Panipat, Bahadurgarh and in Himachal Pradesh police stations. Bhupinder was having high level contacts with senior police and administrative officers in the state as well senior political leaders sheltering him in his illegal business.

Asian stocks gain after Wall St rebounds from inflation jolt

BEIJING: Asian stock markets surged on Friday after Wall Street rebounded from a slump caused by worse-than-forecast inflation numbers.

Japan's market benchmark soared by an unusually wide margin of 3.4 per cent. Hong Kong gained 3.3 per cent and Shanghai also rose. Benchmark US crude oil rose more than USD 2 per barrel. Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index tumbled on Thursday after the headline US consumer price index for September rose 8.2 per cent over a year earlier. But the market benchmark quickly rebounded to end up 2.6 per cent for its biggest daily gain in 2 1/2 years.

The sticker shock of inflation was «shrugged off, possibly because traders already expect another sharp interest rate hike from the Federal Reserve next month to cool surging prices,



said Vishnu Varathan of Mizuho Bank in a report.

The Fed and central banks in Europe and Asia have raised rates by unusually wide margins this year to contain inflation that is at multi-decade highs. Traders worry they might tip the global economy into recession.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 jumped 3.4 per cent to 27,141.18 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong gained 3.3 per cent to 16,935.67. The Shanghai Composite Index added 1.7 per cent to 3,067.65 and the Kospi in Seoul rose 2.4 per cent to 2,214.48. Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 advanced 1.8 per cent to 6,759.40. New Zealand and Southeast Asian markets also rose. On Wall Street, the S&P 500 rose to 3,669.91 after a swing of five percentage points from its lowest point during the day.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 2.8 per cent at 30,038.72. The Nasdaq composite climbed 2.2 per cent at 10,649.15. The US government data showed inflation is spreading more widely across the economy. One component that is closely followed by policy makers and investors accelerated to its hottest level in 40 years. The CPI was down from August's 8.3 per cent increase but not as much as expected. Core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy costs to show the long-term trend, accelerated to 6.6 per cent from August's 6.3 per cent. Prices in September rose 0.6 per cent from the previous month.

Mindtree Reports Strong Performance in Q2 FY23

Mindtree, a global technology services and digital transformation company, announced its consolidated results today for the second quarter ended September 30, 2022, as approved by its Board of directors.

"Our robust performance in the second quarter of FY23 marked a solid first half of the year," said Debasis Chatterjee, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Mindtree. "We not only delivered strong revenues of USD 422.1 million, up 7.2% sequentially in constant currency, but also maintained our EBITDA margin at a healthy 21% despite wage hikes across the board, making it our seventh consecutive quarter of more than 5% revenue growth in constant currency, and eighth consecutive quarter of more than



20% EBITDA margin. Notably, with an order book of USD 518 million, our H1 signings crossed USD 1 billion for the first time in our history, thanks to our ability to help our clients address digital transformation's dual objectives of revenue maximization and cost optimization. We owe our consistent profitable growth to the confidence that our clients and partners have placed in our vision, and to the passion of our more than 38,200 talented professionals who live and breathe that vision every day." Key financial highlights: Quarter ended September 30, 2022 IN USD:

Paytm annualised run rate of loan disbursements touches Rs 34,000 crore in September

NEW DELHI: Digital financial services firm One97 Communications, which operates under the Paytm brand name, on Monday posted around 17 per cent increase in annualised run rate of loan disbursements to around Rs 34,000 crore in September.

The company had posted an annualised run rate of loan disbursements of about Rs 29,000 crore in August. «Our loan distribution business (in partnership with top lenders) con-



continues to witness accelerated growth with disbursements through our platform now at an annualised run rate of Rs

34,000 crore in the month of September.» the company said in a regulatory filing. During the reported month, total number of loans disbursed by Paytm grew by over three fold to about 92 lakh in the quarter ended September 2022, from 28.41 lakh a year ago.

The value of loans disbursed through Paytm grew close to six times to Rs 7,313 crore, from Rs 1,257 crore in the September 2021 quarter.

The company's average

monthly transaction user (MTU) for the quarter ended September 2022, increased 39 per cent to 7.97 crore on a year-on-year basis.

During the September 2022 quarter, the total merchant gross merchandise value (GMV), which is the total payments volume processed by the merchants, grew by 63 per cent to an aggregated value of Rs 3.18 lakh crore on a year-on-year basis, according to the filing.

Markets rebound sharply amid heavy buying in IT stocks, firm global trends

MUMBAI: Equity benchmark Sensex jumped 1,087 points in early trade on Friday helped by heavy buying in IT counters and rally in global stock markets.

The 30-share BSE index was trading 1,087.14 points higher at 58,322.47 in early trade. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty climbed 317.3 points to 17,331.65. All the Sensex components were trading in the green, with Infosys trading nearly 4 per cent higher, followed by HCL Technologies, Tech Mahindra, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank and HDFC Ltd.

India's second largest IT services company Infosys on Thursday posted better-than-expected 11 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 6,021 crore for the Septem-



ber quarter and announced buyback of shares worth Rs 9,300 crore. In Asia, markets in Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were trading higher in mid-session deals. Equities on Wall Street ended significantly higher on Thursday. The BSE benchmark declined 390.58 points or 0.68 per cent to settle at 57,235.33 on Thursday. The Nifty fell 109.25 points

or 0.64 per cent to end at 17,014.35. International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.13 per cent lower at USD 94.45 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the Indian capital market on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,636.43 crore, as per exchange data.

Gold falls Rs 261, silver declines Rs 692



NEW DELHI: Gold price fell by Rs 261 to Rs 51,098 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday amid a decline in the prices of yellow metal in the international market, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 51,359 per 10 grams. Silver also declined by Rs 692 to Rs 57,477 per kilogram from Rs 58,169 per kg. «The precious metal could continue to be pressured by the rising yields and expensive dollar,» said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities in the international market, gold was trading lower at USD 1,665.2 per ounce while silver was down at USD 18.95 per ounce.

Rupee falls lifetime low of 82.69 against US dollar

MUMBAI: The rupee depreciated 39 paise on Oct 10 to an all-time low of 82.69 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday as elevated crude oil prices and risk-averse sentiment among investors weighed on the local unit.

Moreover, a negative trend in domestic equities and firm American currency sapped investor appetite, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 82.68 against the greenback, then slipped further to 82.69, registering a fall of 39 paise over its previous close.

On Friday, the rupee depreciated further by 13 paise to hit a new lifetime closing low of 82.30 against the US dollar. «The double whammy of higher US rates and higher crude prices is back to haunt



the rupee. While the RBI was able to defend the rupee successfully through the last round of simultaneous stress on current and capital accounts by spending its reserves, this time around things are likely to be different,» IFA Global Research Academy said in a note. India's forex reserves dropped by USD 4.854 billion to USD 532.664

billion as on September 30, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

The reserves, which have been dipping as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments, had declined by over USD 8.134 billion to USD 537.518 billion in the previous reporting week. «After having exhausted a sig-

nificant portion of its reserves, RBI seems concerned about the burn rate of reserves and appears to be spending them very judiciously. This has resulted in the rupee adjusting and aligning itself with fundamentals and its peer group currencies,» IFA Global Research Academy's note said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.02 per cent up at 112.81.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures fell 0.87 per cent to USD 97.07 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex was trading 646.25 points or 1.11 per cent lower at 57,545.04, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 192.10 points or 1.11 per cent to 17,122.55.

Subscription amount to GPF in respect of subscriber not to be less than 6% of emoluments



The Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare, Ministry of Personnel said that in accordance with the General Provident Fund (GPF) Central Services rules, the amount of subscription to the GPF in respect of a subscriber shall not be less than six per cent of the emoluments and not more than total emoluments of the subscriber. The department has said that the sum of the monthly subscription by a subscriber under the GPF during a financial year together with the amount of arrears subscriptions deposited in that year shall not exceed the threshold limit, which is currently Rs five lakh. «All Ministries and departments are requested that the above amended provisions of the GPF rules, 1960 regarding the limit of subscription under GPF in a financial year by a subscriber may be given wide publicity to all government servants and more particularly to the personnel dealing with the GPF matters in the Ministry/Department and attached offices for strict implementation,» said an order issued on October 11 by the department of pension.

43% of Indians not willing to pay extra for 5G services

NEW DELHI: As India rolls out 5G services at some locations in select cities, 43 per cent of those willing to switch to 5G are not willing to pay anything more than current tariff for 3G or 4G services, a report showed on Friday.

While many more smartphone users are likely to come onboard if the shift to 5G addresses issues like call drop/connect, network availability and low speed, another 43 per cent indicated they are willing to pay up to 10 per cent extra tariff, according to the report by online community platform LocalCircles.

Just 2 per cent of them showed willingness to pay between 25-50 per cent more tariff for 5G. As against 4G speeds of 40-50 Mbps depending on the area and connectivity in India, 5G services are expected to support speeds of 300 Mbps or more.

To begin with, Reliance Jio and Airtel have identified Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Varanasi, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jamnagar, Gandhinagar, Mumbai, Pune, Lucknow, Kolkata, Siliguri, Gurugram and Hyderabad for the first phase of launch.

According to the report, just 5 per cent mobile subscribers surveyed are ready to move to 5G in 2022. While 20 per cent surveyed said they already have a 5G device, another 4 per cent are likely to get one this year.



Another 20 per cent said they are likely to purchase a 5G device in 2023. Out of more than 500 million smartphone users in India, about 100 million are expected to have a 5G-ready device by the end of this year.

Nearly 24 per cent respondents shared that they have no plans to buy a new upgraded device in the foreseeable future, while another 22 per cent are yet to make up their mind, the findings showed.

The Department of Telecommunication met with the operators as well as phone makers earlier this week to update the government about their plans so that the 5G rollout can happen at the earliest.

Samsung said that they are working with their operator partners and are committed to rolling out OTA updates across all its 5G devices by mid-November, Apple said that it will start rolling out 5G to iPhone users in December.

Majority mobile subscribers expect that upgrading to 5G service will lead to reduction in call drop/connect issues, better network availability and speed

FM Sitharaman meets US Treasury Secy Janet Yellen, invites her to India



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in Washington D.C., during which she invited the latter to visit India next month.

During their meeting on Tuesday, Sitharaman and Yellen discussed current global macroeconomic situation among other issues of mutual interest, the Finance Ministry said in a tweet.

«The two Ministers also discussed various issues of significance with a view towards India's upcoming G20 Presidency,» it said. After the meeting, Sitharaman invited Yellen to India in November to attend the US-India Economic and Financial Partnership meeting, the Ministry added.

This will be Yellen's first visit to India as Treasury Secretary.

Prime Minister to lay foundation stone for Bulk Drug Park to attract Rs 10,000 cr investment in Himachal

UNA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Himachal Pradesh on Thursday -- his ninth visit to the state in the five years and second in almost a week -- to flag off Vande Bharat Express, lay the foundation stones of Bulk Drug Park that will attract investment of around Rs 10, 000 crore and provide employment to more than 20, 000 people.

He will also lay foundation stones for two hydropower projects of nearly Rs 700 crore and launch Rs 3, 000 crore Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-III well ahead of the Assembly



polls in the BJP-ruled state.

Chief Minister Jairam Thakur, who is leading the party's election campaign that has gained momentum, said this is the ninth visit of the Prime Minister which reflects his bonding with the state and

to Una, the Prime Minister would be inaugurating Rs 128 crore Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) and lay the foundation stone of Bulk Drug Pharma Park to be established in Haroli.

Prime Minister Modi would also flag-off the new Vande Bharat Express from the Una railway station. The Prime Minister's clarion call for Aatmanirbhar Bharat or self-reliant India has led to the country moving swiftly towards attainment of self-reliance across multiple sectors, through support of various new initiatives of the govern-

ment. One such key sector is pharmaceuticals, and in order to bring in Aatmanirbharta in this sector the Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of Bulk Drug Park at Haroli to be built at a cost of Rs 1, 923 crore.

The park will help reduce dependence on active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) or pharmaceutical raw material imports. It is expected to attract investment of around Rs 10, 000 crore and provide employment to more than 20, 000 people. It will also give a fillip to economic activities in the region.

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



You are rich when your money is making you new money with no effort on your part. You are not rich if you have to trade labour for money. Money management is way more important than earning money. That's why it is said that financial literacy can make you rich.

Financial literacy can make you rich. It is basically your relationship with the money you earn and how effectively you use it to improve your finances. Adopting proper budgeting, saving and investment is what financial literacy is all about. So step one is to make money which would be most important, but once you have money or sufficient income, step two becomes most important i.e. to utilize that money to its greatest potential or to help you achieve your long-term goals.

The world's most successful investor Warren Buffett once said «Never invest in a business you do not understand.»

An investment journey takes time and getting some financial knowledge or a short-term course is advisable. Starting from a small amount and for the long term is best practice. Starting an investing journey in the stock market has become so easy these days, it rarely takes ten minutes to mark your beginning. One just has to open a Demat account with a favorite stock broker firm. Things will take forward from there. It's fairly easy. One should definitely allocate some percentage of yearly income into least-risk equity assets as a part of financial planning. The question arises what

Financial Literacy is as important as making money

about the emergency fund? Depending upon your income and expenses, this fund can be 6 to 12 months of the monthly income. If you earn Rs 40,000 a month and Rs 20,000 goes into meeting your routine living expenses, then your emergency fund should be in the range of Rs 2 to 4 Lakh. An emergency fund is an essential corpus that you must keep separate to tackle your emergencies. It is a fund you can utilize in the hour of crisis and for unexpected or unplanned scenarios, not for your regular expenses.

Chandrakant Patil, founder and CEO, Grofinanc, says, «Money management is way more important than earning money. I know people with an income of over Rs 25 Lakhs per year, who are so deep in debt that they would lose everything if they ever had to go through a couple of months without a paycheck. Once you have made some money you need to figure



out what you are going to do with it. You can spend it, save it or invest it, or a mix of these three.»

Gone are the days when women used to stand aloof from money matters. Women today are breaking age-old barriers and financial independence is one of them. With improved participation of women in the workforce, soaring careers, and inheritance, women possess a growing amount of wealth globally. A financial plan helps you be in control of your income, expenses, and investments, such

that you can manage your money and achieve your goals. What's even more important is how prudently women spend and invest their money. Women need to be financially independent no matter whether they are working, stay-at-home moms, or a homemaker: to meet the rising cost of living, be able to save, spend, invest and feel in control.

Is it necessary to be a miser to create wealth? Being a miser is absolutely a bad trait in a person, but it can be a good quality as well when you are financially literate and you do

not want to waste your hard-earned money on unnecessary luxuries. One must understand the difference between need and lavishness, till someone is addressing the needs and is sensible about lavishness it's fine to be a miser.

What are some smart habits for saving, budgeting, and growing your income? Simple, wait before buying a newly released item and don't pay the premium price. Always try to pay for things with cash or debit, not credit cards. Minimize credit card debt or any other debt if you have one. Always track your expenses and try to cut down on your unnecessary spending. Your savings should be at least 10% of your monthly income. Decide on your priorities while spending. Extra money doesn't mean buying more, but it gives you an option to save more.

India's FinTech vehicle is moving on the wheels of financial inclusion and trust. There is no doubt that a new

type of revolution is taking shape in the country with the combination of finance and technology. Rich or poor, the FinTech revolution is bringing a pleasant change in the life of everyone. Financial transactions have started getting faster. Intermediaries are vanishing from the marketplace. The common man is also able to take full advantage of the facilities of Fintech like digital payments, Paytm wallet, etc. India has changed the course of banking with 43 crore Jan Dhan accounts in the last seven years. So far 69 crore RuPay cards have been issued through which 1.3 billion transactions were done last year. About 4.2 billion transactions were made possible last month through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). Businesses in India upload nearly 30 crore invoices to the GST (Goods and Services Tax) portal every month, which involves payments of more than \$12 billion.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, around 15 lakh railway tickets were booked online every day. Last year, 1.3 billion transactions were made possible through FASTag. If money is the lifeblood of the economy, technology is its vehicle. It can also be said that the birds of money fly with the wings of technology. Our country had the highest dependence on ATM machines till the year 2014. If you wanted to buy anything, you had to pay by withdrawing cash from the ATM machine. Due to the accessibility of the Internet, gradually the trend of mobile banking and net banking started increasing. Post demonetization, ATM usage declined at an annual rate of 10 per cent since the year 2017. In place of cash transactions, the trend of payment through mobile wallets started.

Narvijay Yadav an Independent journalist. Views are personal.

INTERNATIONAL

Bhatti family who had donated 18500 acre land to Gurdwara Nankana Sahib denied visa to visit Sri Harmandir Sahib Amritsar

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The visa to visit India to the Pakistani renowned family of Rai Bular Bhatti's has not been granted by the Indian embassy.

Rai Bular Bhatti who had donated 18500 acre land to Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in Lahore province of Pakistan was keen to visit Golden Temple Amritsar to attend the event being organized by the SGPC wherein the portrait of Rai Bular Bhatti to be installed.

Talking to FW from Lahore Pakistan, Rai Saleem Bhatti (44), an eminent lawyer at the Lahore High Court and 19th generation of Rai Bular Bhatti expressed his sadness for not granting visa to him and his family to attend the event arranged by Shriomani Gurdwara Pharbandhak Committee to set up a



portrait of Rai Bular Bhatti, a 15th century Muslim big landlord of undivided Punjab and disciple of Guru Nanak Dev, at Central Sikh Museum in the Golden Temple complex on October 15.

Bhatti said that it was not the first time whereupon he was not given visa to visit to India as earlier the same incident happened thrice, as first time in 2018, 2019 and 2020. The Indian embassy people every

time said apply again after some time.

"But this time our entire family saddened when visa was not granted to us, since it was such a holy occasion when SGPC was going to install the portrait of Rai Bular Bhatti in the Central Museum of Golden Temple in spite of the completion of all visa formalities and strong recommendation by SGPC but Indian Embassy was this time again not kind enough with us to enable

us to visit Golden Temple", he quipped.

"We have conveyed our inability to the SGPC for not visiting India as per the event being organized by the SGPC but requested the SGPC to go ahead and install the portrait of Rai Bular Bhatti Sahib. We will definitely come to the Golden Temple when Baba Nanak will shower His grace to the Bhatti's family", said he.

"Rai Bular Bhatti Sahib was a

staunch follower of Baba Guru Nanak Peer. The Bhatti family had donated 18500 acre land to Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of founder Sikhism Guru Nanak", he informed.

Being Muslim, Bhatti family has great respect for the Sikh religion and there is no doubt Baba Nanak is the Guru of Sikh community but also Peer for Muslims since during the life time of Baba Nanak's majority of the followers were from Muslims and Baba Nanak has respect for the people from all religions", said he.

Infact, the event was scheduled for October 11 on the Parkash Purb of Guru Ramdas, but it could not happen as the descendants of Rai Bular Bhatti were unable to reach for due to non-clearance of visa from the Indian authorities. Now SGPC will go ahead with the event on October 15.

Ukraine conflict does not serve interests of anybody, says EAM S Jaishankar

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday that the Ukraine conflict does not serve the interests of anybody, as he stressed that India was against such hostilities as it can have a "very profound impact" on everybody across the world.

During a joint press meet with his Australian counterpart Penny Wong here, Jaishankar also declined to predict India's vote in advance on the upcoming draft resolution against Russia in the UN General Assembly.

"As a matter of prudence and policy, we don't predict our votes in advance. We have been very clearly against the conflict in Ukraine, the minister said when asked about India's stance during the upcoming UN General Assembly debate about not recognising the recent annexation of



four Ukrainian territories by Russia.

"We believe that this conflict does not serve the interests of anybody neither the participants nor indeed of the international community. And as a country of the Global South, we have been seeing first-hand how much it has impacted low-income countries, the challenges that they are facing in terms of fuel and food and fertilisers.

"So, my Prime Minister said a few weeks ago at a summit

contact, "this is not an era of war". And, you know, a conflict today in some corner of the world can have a very profound impact on everybody across the world. And I think that continues to guide our thinking," said Jaishankar, who arrived in Canberra on Sunday from Wellington in New Zealand.

Russia President Vladimir Putin recently signed treaties to annex the four regions of Ukraine, saying they were now part of his country and would be defended by Moscow.

India had abstained on a draft resolution tabled in the UN Security Council earlier this month which condemned Russia's "illegal referenda" and annexation of four Ukrainian territories and called for an immediate cessation of violence while underlining the need to find pathways for a return to the negotiating table.

Explosions rock central Kyiv in apparent missile strikes



Multiple explosions rocked Kyiv early Monday following months of relative calm in the Ukrainian capital.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported explosions in the city's Shevchenko district, a large area in the center of Kyiv that includes the historic old town as well as several government offices.

Lesia Vasylenko, a member of Ukraine's parliament, posted a photo on Twitter showing that at least one explosion occurred near the main building of the Kyiv National University in central Kyiv.

The spokesperson for Emergency Service in Kyiv told the AP that there are killed and wounded people. Rescuers are now working in different locations, said Svitlana Vodolaga.

The number of casualties is not yet known. The explosions were heard by AP journalists and appeared to be the result of missile strikes. The last previous attack on Kyiv was in June. One of the missiles struck an apartment building, killing one and wounding six.

ICC to promote gender equality in tie-up with UNICEF



DUBAI: The International Cricket Council has entered into a partnership with UNICEF to empower women and girls and promote inclusion and gender equality through cricket.

The partnership will be activated in the upcoming T20 World Cup in Australia where all 16 nations will hold <Cricket 4 Good Coaching Clinics with up to 40 school children taking part in each one. The players will introduce the children to <Cricket 4 Good>, a cricket development curriculum as the participants will also learn more about gender equity and get to meet their cricketer heroes. <I am so proud, as the dad of a daughter, to be a champion for girls and support the partnership between the ICC and UNICEF to promote gender equity through cricket.> Aussie captain Aaron Finch said.

UN mulls quick foreign troop deployment to ease Haiti crisis

The United Nations Security Council was evaluating options including the immediate activation of foreign troops to help free Haiti from the grip of gangs that has caused a scarcity of fuel, water and other basic supplies.

Such a force would remove the threat posed by armed gangs and provide immediate protection to critical infrastructure and services, as well as secure the free movement of water, fuel, food and medical supplies from main ports and airports to communities and health care facilities, according to a letter UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres submitted to the council on last Sunday.

The letter, which was seen by The Associated Press and has not been made public, said one or several member states would deploy the force to help Haiti's National Police.

It also states the secretary-general may deploy additional UN capacities to support a cease-fire or humanitarian arrangements.

However, the letter notes that a return to a more robust



United Nations engagement in the form of peacekeeping remains a last resort if no decisive action is urgently taken by the international community in line with the outlined options and national law enforcement capacity proves unable to reverse the deteriorating security situation.

The letter was submitted after Haiti Prime Minister Ariel Henry and 18 high-ranking officials requested from international partners the immediate deployment of a specialised armed force, in sufficient quantity, to stop the criminal actions of armed gangs across the country.

The request comes nearly a month after one of Haiti's most powerful gangs seized control of a key fuel terminal in the capital of Port-au-Prince, where some 10 million gallons of diesel and gasoline and more than 800,000 gallons of kerosene are stored.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators also have barricaded streets in Port-au-Prince and other major cities in recent weeks, preventing the flow of goods and traffic as part of an ongoing protest against a spike in the prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene.

Taiwan leader tells China force 'absolutely not an option'

China's threats of military action against Taiwan are absolutely not an option and will only push our two sides further from each other, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen said Monday.

Speaking on Taiwan's National Day, Tsai said China should not mistake competition within Taiwan's multiparty democratic political system for weakness and attempt to divide Taiwanese society.

I want to make clear to the Beijing authorities that armed confrontation is absolutely not an option for our two sides," Tsai said.

Only by respecting the commitment of the Taiwanese people to our sovereignty, democracy, and freedom can there be a foundation for resuming constructive interaction across the Taiwan Strait," she said.

Fighter jets and a Chinook helicopter displaying Taiwan's flag flew overhead while the



band from Taipei's First Girls' High School played hits ranging from the Beatles to Lady Gaga.

National Day included international guests such as Palau President Surangel S. Whipps Jr., whose country's blue and yellow flag flew alongside Taiwan's red banner with its blue square and white star.

Despite its expression of Taiwan's endurance as an independent political entity with a thriving democracy and free press, the holiday generally known as Double Ten

in Taiwan commemorates a 1911 uprising by troops in the Chinese city of Wuhan that eventually led to downfall of the Qing Dynasty. China's Communist Party swept the Nationalist government from the mainland amid civil war in 1949 and continues to claim the island.

Tsai's speech focused largely on Taiwan's success in strengthening the social security net for an aging society and continuing to grow its high-tech economy despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indian student stabbed multiple times in Australia allegedly for cash



SYDNEY: A 28-year-old Indian student has been stabbed multiple times in the face, chest and abdomen in Australia by a man who allegedly demanded cash, authorities said.

The incident took place on October 6 at about 10.30 pm, as Shubham Garg walked along the Pacific Highway, NSW Police Force said in a statement on Monday. Police have arrested Daniel Norwood and the 27-year-old suspect is charged with attempted murder after Garg, allegedly suffered multiple stab wounds to the face, chest and abdomen, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported.

The man (Garg) suffered multiple stab wounds to his face, chest, and abdomen; he sought assistance from a nearby house before being taken to Royal North Shore Hospital. The man underwent surgery and remains there in a serious but stable condition, the NSW Police Force statement said.

Garg was approached by an unknown man near the Pacific Highway Lane Cove on Thursday. The unknown man allegedly threatened him while demanding cash, In The Cove newspaper reported.

The man refused and was allegedly stabbed a number of times in the abdomen before the assailant fled, the report added.

The emergency services were called. The North Shore Police Area Command attended and located the injured man and established a crime scene, it said. Officers attached to North Shore Police Area Command have been investigating the stabbing and formed Strike Force Prosy, it said. Following extensive inquiries by Strike Force Prosy detectives, a search warrant was executed on a home on the Pacific Highway at Greenwich at about 3.40 pm on Sunday.

Suspect accused of killing Sikh family in US pleads not guilty



The main suspect who kidnapped and killed four members of an Indian-origin Sikh family, including a baby girl, in California has entered a not guilty plea in court, authorities said.

The Sikh family of four, 8-month-old Aroohi Dheri, her 27-year-old mother Jasleen Kaur, her 36-year-old father Jasdeep Singh, and her 39-year-old uncle Amandeep Singh were kidnapped at gunpoint and killed allegedly by Jesus Salgado, a former disgruntled employee of their trucking company. Salgado entered a not guilty plea in court on Thursday, Merced County Chief Deputy District Attorney Matthew Serratto was quoted as saying by CNN.

Salgado, who was arrested on October 6, is charged with four counts of first-degree murder with special circumstances for the death of the



Indian-origin family. He is also charged with arson and possession of a firearm by a prohibited person.

Salgado was in court four days prior on Monday, but his arraignment was continued after he told the judge he needed more time to find an attorney. On Thursday, he told the judge he still did not find an attorney, so he was appointed a public defender.

Prosecutors also added a special allegation of kidnapping to the charges, alleging that Salgado forcefully took the family from their trucking business. Authorities have said Salgado, who is a former employee of the family's business, kidnapped the four from their central California business last Monday and killed them that day. The family was kidnapped at gunpoint an abduction which was recorded on surveillance video.

Rain warning for Mexico's south Gulf coast as TS Karl nears



MEXICO CITY: Tropical Storm Karl moved slowly toward Mexico's southern Gulf coast, and while it was not expected to grow into a hurricane, forecasters warned of the danger of flash floods from heavy rains in the region. The storm was expected to weaken somewhat on Friday before making landfall in Veracruz state or Tabasco state by late Friday or early Saturday. Karl had maximum sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph) late on Thursday, the US National Hurricane Centre said. The storm was centred about 155 miles (245 kilometres) north-northeast of the resort town of Ciudad del Carmen and headed southeast at 7 mph (11 kph).

Joe Biden admin extends COVID public health emergency

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration said on Thursday that the COVID-19 public health emergency will continue through January 11 as officials brace for a spike in cases this winter.

The decision comes as the pandemic has faded from the forefront of many people's minds. Daily deaths and infections are dropping and people many of them maskless are returning to schools, work and grocery stores as normal.

The public health emergency, first declared in January 2020 and renewed every 90 days since, has dramatically changed how health services are delivered.

The declaration enabled the emergency authorisation of COVID vaccines, testing and treatments for free. It expanded Medicaid coverage to millions of people, many of whom who will risk losing that coverage once the emergency ends. It temporarily opened up telehealth access for Medicare recipients,



enabling doctors to collect the same rates for those visits and encouraging health networks to adopt telehealth technology.

Since the beginning of this year, Republicans have pressed the administration to end the public health emergency.

President Joe Biden, meanwhile, has urged Congress to provide billions more in aid to pay for COVID-19 vaccines and testing. The federal government ceased sending free COVID-19 tests in the mail last month, saying it had run out of money.

Public health officials are urging people age 5 and older to get an updated COVID-19 booster alongside a flu vaccine this fall before a predicted winter coronavirus surge and a nasty flu season.

As of last weekend, about 13 million people had gotten the updated booster, which targets the omicron variant, according to White House COVID-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha.

The administration has said it would provide 60 days notice before it ends the public health emergency.

Climate change: The fairest way to tax carbon is to make air travel more expensive

Despite the fact that poorer people generally have lower emissions, taxes on the carbon dioxide (CO2) our activities emit tend to affect people on low incomes more than richer people. Having less money means you can ill afford a switch to an untaxed alternative, like an electric car, or pay for carbon-saving measures like home insulation. You are also more likely to struggle to use less of an essential good like petrol or gas for heating, even if the price goes up.

Carbon taxes on energy that people use in their homes for heating, cooking or watching TV charge consumers for the emissions per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of electricity, gas or oil used. Economists would say that these kinds of carbon taxes are regressive, because using energy to heat and power your home is a necessity and poorer people will use a much higher share of their income to pay for these things and the taxes than richer people.

While total emissions have



been falling in several rich countries over the last few years, emissions from cars and other means of transport are growing. The rise in air travel emissions has been especially rapid: a roughly sevenfold increase between 1960 and 2018 globally.

What's more, the fuels for heating and powering homes or driving cars are taxed, but the fuel airlines use is exempt due to an international agreement from 1944.

And although Europeans generally disapprove of carbon taxes, our study has revealed one

type which could prove popular. In the first analysis of its kind to consider the effect on different income bands, we found that carbon taxes on air travel what we describe as luxury emissions nearly always affect the rich more.

Tax burdens from air travel. Our research examined how the burden from four different taxes on air travel would fall across income groups in the UK. It shows that all of these taxes are progressive: they burden richer people more than poorer people as a proportion of income. This

is because people on higher incomes are much more likely to fly, and fly more often.

Air travel taxes that apply to passengers could be levied on the emissions of each passenger per flight. People could also be taxed according to the distance they travel, or their seat class. An aeroplane's economy class occupies the least space per person, while business- and first-class passengers take up more room and so are responsible for more emissions than the average passenger.

A person could also be taxed for the number of flights they take. A frequent flyer levy would exempt the first return flight a person takes in a year, but would tax subsequent flights at an increasing rate. We found that taxes that take both flight emissions and the number of flights per passenger into account distribute the tax burden fairest.

The reason for this is that frequent air travel (all flights after the first return flight) is even more unequally distributed

in society: the top 10% of emitters are responsible for 60.8% of flight emissions but for 83.7% of emissions from frequent flights.

Who else except the wealthy is likely to be affected by taxes on air travel? We found that, in the UK, university graduates, employed people, young and middle-aged adults, residents of London, as well as first- and second-generation migrants are also more likely to fly than their counterparts, regardless of income. Our results showed that recent migrants with friends and family abroad are relatively likely to fly often, even when on a low income. So allowances or extra support for recent migrants could make the design of such taxes fairer.

Overall, taxes on air travel are far more socially just than taxes on necessities such as home energy use and could curb luxury emissions in a way that nurtures broad support for more sweeping decarbonisation measures such as those designed to limit car travel, like expanding bus and cycling lanes.

Bomb threat on Moscow-Delhi flight, search underway at Delhi International airport

NEW DELHI: Situation at Indira Gandhi International Airport became chaotic after the Delhi Police received a PCR call about a bomb in a flight that was coming from Moscow. It was an international call that was made to the police.

The police said that they got the PCR call at around 11.15 p.m. that the flight which was coming from Moscow, and was scheduled to land at 3.20 a.m.,



had a bomb in it.

After receiving the call the security agencies were put on standby the whole night.

<FLIGHT No SU 232 (Moscow to Delhi) landed at

runway number 29. It was carrying 386 passengers and 16 crew members. All were safely evacuated. The plane was taken to a safe and was thoroughly checked. As of now no bomb was found, <the official said.

The police said that it was an international call which alerted them about the bomb.

They were still checking the baggage of the passengers. Further details were awaited.

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They were still checking the baggage of the passengers. Further details were awaited.



'Bigg Boss 16' Sajid Khan will not be ousted from the show

Ever since filmmaker Sajid Khan stepped into 'Bigg Boss 16', controversies have shrouded the reality show. There were reports claiming that the #MeToo accused will be shown the exit door in the coming week, however, new reports say that he will remain in the house.

Sajid has been accused of sexual misconduct by many including Mandana Karimi, Aahana Kumra, Kanishka Soni, and Sheryl Chopra. He has been accused of sexual assault allegations which includes flashing his private parts at parties, asking female actors to send him their nude pictures as part of the casting process and watching porn in front of women. Earlier reports stated that Colors has decided to oust Sajid while Salman Khan continued to fight as he has a good bond with his sister Farah Khan. The report by Times Of India October 13 claimed that Sajid will have to make his exit from the reality show within a week.

A source told to media "All these are mere rumours and there's no truth to it. There's no truth in Sajid Khan getting ousted from Bigg Boss 16's house, he's there for the show & will only get out following the rules of it if he gets eliminated at any given time. All these rumours have been spread as personal vendetta against him."



Rapper Badshah dating Punjabi actress Isha Rikhi

THEY FIGURED OUT THAT THEY HAVE FAMILIAR TASTE IN FILMS AND MUSIC, SO THEY VIBED TOGETHER

Rapper Badshah, who separated from his wife Jasmine almost two years ago, is reportedly dating Punjabi actress Isha Rikhi, who has worked in films such as 'Nawaabzaade',

'What The Jatt' and 'Do Dooni Panj'.

According to reports, the couple has been dating for almost a year but they are keeping their relationship low profile as they want to take things slow.

Badshah met Isha at a party through their mutual friend and hit it off instantly, reports Pinkvilla.

"They figured out that they

have familiar taste in films and music, so they vibed together. Badshah and Isha have already told about their relationship to their respective families," the report quoted a source.

Badshah has a daughter Jessemey Grace Masih Singh with his former wife. Post the pandemic, Jasmine reportedly shifted base to London along with their daughter.

Zoey Deschanel boards cast of 'Physical' S3 at Apple



Actor Zoey Deschanel has joined the cast of third season of comedy drama series 'Physical'.

Apple ordered a third season of the show in August. 'Physical' features Rose Byrne, Dierdre Friel, Della Saba, Lou Taylor Pucci, Paul Sparks, Ashley Liao and Geoffrey Arend.

According to entertainment website Variety, Deschanel will play the role of Kelly, described as a former sitcom star who jumps into the burgeoning fitness industry.

"The comedy is set in the beachy paradise of sunny 1980s San Diego and follows Sheila Rubin (Byrne), a quietly tortured, seemingly dutiful housewife supporting her smart but controversial husband's bid for state assembly. Sheila comes to find her own reprieve from her daily woes in the world of aerobics, but it comes with its own host of troubles as well," the official synopsis reads.

Millie Bobby Brown says she would like to write musical finale for 'Stranger Things'



"Stranger Things" star Millie Bobby Brown says she would love to pen a musical finale for the popular Netflix series.

The actor, who plays Eleven on "Stranger Things", said she has some interesting ideas for the final episode of the 1980s-set show.

"I'd love to be the writer! I'd make it more of a musical. But, you know, they don't entrust it in the hands of me, which they should," Millie told Total Film.

The 18-year-old actor said she would like "Stranger Things" to end on a high note like FX comedy "It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia", starring Rob McElhenney, Charlie Day, Kaitlin Olson and Glenn Howerton. "Trust me, I can do the finale to 'Stranger Things', and it would be great. I think it should be like 'It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia'. Did you ever see the musical episode? It needs to end like that a musical episode," she added.

In the fourth season of "It's Always Sunny", the cast performed a rock opera in an episode titled "The Nightman Cometh," based on songs written by Charlie Kelly (Day).

The fifth and the final season of "Stranger Things" is currently in the scripting stage.

Chronicling the story of a secret government lab which accidentally opens a door to a parallel dimension referred to as the 'upside down', the show also stars Finn Wolfhard and Gaten Matarazzo, Winona Ryder, David Harbour, Caleb McLaughlin, Noah Schnapp, Sadie Sink, Natalia Dyer, Charlie Heaton, Joe Keery and Maya Hawke.

Dharmendra posts picture from Sholay, calls Amitabh 'most talented actor'

MUMBAI: Veteran star Dharmendra has shared a throwback image from the iconic 1975 film 'Sholay' and wished the «most talented» star Amitabh Bachchan for his next movie 'Unchais'.

Dharmendra took to Twitter, where he shared a still from the film. The cine icon, who essayed Jai, is seen wearing a red T-shirt with blue jeans and Dharmendra, who essayed Veeru, is seen wearing a T-shirt with denim jacket and blue jeans.

'Sholay' is about two criminals, Veeru and Jai, hired by a retired police officer to capture the ruthless dacoit Gabbar Singh. Hema Malini and Jaya Bhaduri also star, as Veeru and Jai's love interests, Basanti and Radha, respectively. Sholay is considered



a classic and one of the best Indian films. «Amit, love you. I got a news from Raj Shiri production that you are doing a film with them.

Great. Most talented actor and the best production house together. Wish you all the best,» he wrote. Amitabh Bachchan will be next seen in 'Unchais',

which will be released on November 11. The film is being directed by Sooraj Barjatya and produced under the banner of Rajshri Productions.

Shruti Haasan says she got her broken nose fixed after first film

Actress Shruti Haasan, who is busy with her film 'Salaar', recently admitted to having done a nose job. The actress shared that she had a broken nose and getting to fix her nose is her right. She said that after doing her first film with the old nose, she chose to do the surgery.

While talking to 'Hauterfly' magazine, the actress said, "I did get my nose fixed and it was very obvious I got my nose fixed. My nose was broken and quite different from before and I did my first film with my old nose."

She also revealed how people taunted her by saying that she was using



deviated septum as an excuse to fix her nose. She further mentioned, "And people are like she's just using the deviated septum excuse. No, I did have a deviated septum, it hurt. But if I could make it prettier, it's my face, why

wouldn't I? It was that simple." In addition, she also spoke about getting fillers and said that it is her body and those who want to do something to it or don't want to do something, it is their choice just like it was hers.

Sydney Sweeney to lead Sony Pictures' 'Barbarella' film



Sony Pictures has roped in "Euphoria" star Sydney Sweeney to play the lead role in their upcoming "Barbarella" movie. According to entertainment website Deadline, the project is currently in early development, with no director, producer or writer attached.

Sweeney teased her casting by sharing an image of the artwork from the original 1968 space opera movie. Time to save the universe," she wrote. Adapted from French writer and illustrator Jean-Claude Forest's comic series, the 1968 version of Barbarella featured Jane Fonda as the eponymous space-travelling heroine.

'Dostojee' to release on Nov 11

KOLKATA: Bengali filmmaker Prasoon Chatterjee, whose directorial debut 'Dostojee' has won laurels in several international film festivals including the Nara International Film Festival (IFF) in Japan, says it is a social drama set in a border hamlet of West Bengal and ever relevant as it sees the world through the eyes of two children amid the backdrop of polarization.

The Bengali film had its world premiere at the 65th BFI London Film Festival last year, and got accolades in important film festivals including the Zlin Film Festival in the Czech Republic one of the oldest film festivals for children - and at the Nara IFF, it had competed in the International Competition category with seven other films from around the world to get the top honour.

Joe Manganiello joins 'Dungeons & Dragons' documentary as co-director

Actor Joe Manganiello is set to co-direct a documentary on popular tabletop fantasy game "Dungeons & Dragons" with Kyle Newman. The film, produced by Multinational conglomerate company Hasbro and entertainment banner eOne, is billed as the definitive documentary feature about the world's greatest role playing game. According to entertainment website Variety, the makers are planning to release the documentary around the 50th anniversary of the game in 2024. Manganiello, who is the official ambassador of "Dungeons & Dragons", will also serve as a producer on the project along with his brother Nick Manganiello, Anthony Savini and Cecily Tyler. "Dungeons & Dragons" was created by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson. It was first published by Tactical Studies Rules, Inc. in 1974, and has been distributed by Hasbro subsidiary Wizards of the Coast since 1997.

Dennerby admits India not up to USA standards

BHUBANESWAR: India head coach Thomas Dennerby has admitted that his team was not up to the standard of top quality sides like the USA after it suffered a 0-8 loss to the Americans in the opening match of the FIFA Women's U-17 World Cup here.

Dennerby also took a U-turn regarding his earlier claim that India can compete against any team in the age-group showpiece on the basis of the close game (1-3 loss) against Sweden in Under-17 side in the lead up to the tournament.

"I did not expect to let in so many goals because defending has been quite good when they play against Sweden two and half weeks ago. We defended very well, we had two shots on the bar and we were creating chances.

"But honestly USA were one level up even if you compare with Sweden at least."

Dennerby had said before the USA match that the 1-3 defeat to Sweden as part of preparation was a close game and "if you can play a close game against Sweden, you can do that with any team in this tournament".



Incidentally, Sweden did not qualify for the final round of the UEFA U-17 Championships, the European qualifying tournament for the FIFA event.

Dennerby had earlier mentioned that India prepared very well for the FIFA Women's U-17 World Cup but at the press conference he said that the hosts haven't played any side of the standard of USA in the lead-up to the showpiece. Since the start of preparations in February, the India U-17 side played against Romania (one draw and one loss), Italy (0-7 loss), the Netherlands (1-5 defeat), Sweden (1-3 defeat), Chile (1-3 defeat) and Mexico (0-2 loss).

Out of these countries that

India played against, Romania, Italy and Sweden could not qualify for the UEFA U-17 Championships. Chile and Mexico are competing in the FIFA U-17 World Cup.

"No doubt USA are really a good side. If you look at the USA players, the skillfulness, their speed and you cannot find any weak point in their team. So far the games we have played earlier this year, no team was up to this level," Dennerby said.

"We have not played against any team which sends in top quality corners and players like six feet tall coming in and jumping very high and heading with top class quality," the Swede added.

Trailer of 'Ammu' promises a story about empowering women

CHENNAI: The makers of director Charukesh Sekar's upcoming Telugu Movie 'Ammu', featuring actress Aishwarya Lekshmi in the lead, have now released the trailer of the film.

The film depicts the journey of a woman who, like a phoenix, rises from the ashes of her fairytale marriage-turned-



nightmare. The trailer gives a glimpse into the life of the eponymous character, played

by Aishwarya Lekshmi. Produced by acclaimed filmmaker Karthik Subbaraj and produced by Kalyan Subramanian and Kaarthikeyan Santhanam of Stone Bench Films, 'Ammu' has been written and directed by Charukesh Sekar, and is set to premiere on Prime Video starting October 19.

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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