

**REGION**

**2**

**EFFORTS OF DEFENSE SIKH NETWORK UK REGARDING SIKH IDENTITY WITHIN BRITISH ARMY COMMENDABLE: DHAMI**



**CORPORATES & INDUSTRY**

**5**

**EULER MOTORS TIES UP WITH SHRIRAM TRANSPORT FINANCE COMPANY FOR RETAIL EV FINANCING**



**POTPOURRI**

**8**

**ACTRESS SIDDHIKA SHARMA IS GETTING A LOT OF APPRECIATION FOR HER ROLE IN THE FILM OYE MAKHNA**



## Punjab CM acts tough on Kotkapura incident, directs Police to nab the culprits at earliest

**CHANDIGARH:** Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday said that the state government will not allow any anti-social element to disturb the hard-earned peace and communal harmony of the state at any cost.

The Chief Minister, while chairing a high-level meeting with the senior officers of state administration and Punjab police, directed the Senior Police Officers that none of the culprits responsible for the killing of Dera follower should be spared and the accused must be given stern punishment as per law. During the meeting, the Police Officers briefed the Chief Minister about the incident.

The Chief Minister said that this sensitive matter should be thoroughly being investigated by the police from every aspect and the case will be taken to a legal conclusion without any bias. He asserted that no criminal incident can



be viewed with the narrow aspect of caste or religion and the perpetrators of this crime will not be spared at any cost. Bhagwant Mann unequivocally said, "These unfortunate incidents are being carried out with nefarious designs to dent the strong bonds of our decade-old brotherhood, communal harmony, mutual love and unity".

The Chief Minister said that the state government is

firmly committed to maintaining a law and order situation in Punjab and no one will be allowed to disturb the hard-earned peace at any cost. He said that these forces will be given a befitting reply. During the meeting, the Chief Minister also ordered the officers to conduct a review of licensed firearms across the state to find out the use of firearms in such criminal activities.

To further strengthen the

law and order situation, the Chief Minister directed the officers to train the police force on modern lines to make them more competent to deal with criminals. Expressing confidence in the efficiency of the Punjab police, Bhagwant Mann said that the police force of the state has a glorious tradition of combatting the fissionary forces adding that it had bravely combatted the dark period of terrorism. He also said that Punjab Police had solved many sensitive cases in the past through their professional intelligence and competence.

The Chief Minister asked the Police to enhance vigil across the state by organising special checking. He said that no one should be allowed to disturb law and order in the state. Bhagwant Mann further said that the police force will deal sternly with those who are attempting to disturb the peaceful environment of the state.

## Several resolutions regarding Sikh issues passed during SGPC annual general house session

**SEPARATE HARYANA SIKH GURDWARA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE A PLOY BY THE ANTI-SIKH FORCES TO WEAKEN THE SIKH POWER**

**IMPLEMENT A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (UCC) THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY STRONGLY OPPOSED**

**JAGMOHAN SINGH**  
*Amritsar*

During today's annual general house session of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), several important resolutions regarding Sikh issues were passed. In the first resolution, all the organisations and people who supported in observing the centenaries of Morcha Guru Ka Bagh and Shaheedi Saka (martyrdom massacre) Sri Panja Sahib were thanked and an appeal was made to Sikh Qaum (community) to move forward in an organized manner towards the community's goals by getting inspiration from these sakes and morchas (massacres and fronts) of Sikh history.

Through a resolution, the separate Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC) was rejected absolutely, terming it as a ploy by the anti-Sikh forces to weaken the Sikh power. HSGMC was said to be unconstitutional, which would never be accepted.



In this resolution, the tactics used by the Congress, BJP and the Aam Aadmi Party for trying to HSGMC were exposed and it was said that according to the Sikh Gurdwaras Act 1925, the management of Gurdwaras in the state of Haryana is and will remain with the SGPC. It was made clear to the Government of India that in this matter it should respect the Sikh sentiments and bring a resolution in Parliament to repeal Haryana Sikh Gurdwara (Management) Act, 2014.

The discriminatory policy being adopted by the governments in the matter of release of Bandi Singhs

(Sikh political prisoners) was condemned in strong terms through a resolution. The resolution said that not releasing Bandi Singhs is a big injustice to the Sikhs, while the governments are showing their real face by releasing murderers and rapists. It was passed in resolution that the SGPC will continue to be committed for the release of Bandi Singhs and to further this movement, the campaign of filling forms from the Sangat will be started from December 1, 2022, after which the filled forms will be handed over to the Governor of Punjab.

In a resolution, the Centre government's plan to implement a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) throughout the country was strongly opposed. It was said that this plan is another step towards making the country a Hindu Rashtra. In this resolution, it was clarified to the Centre Government that India being a multilingual, multi-religious country, people of different communities live here and the minorities especially the Sikhs made a special contribution to the freedom struggle and to save the country's culture. But the minorities living here are being suppressed and their religious and social concerns are being interfered with. It was said that the BJP government at the Centre is running under the agenda of raising the majority under the influence of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) and the plan to implement a UCC in the country is also a part of this. It is not in the interest of the country and it should not be implemented.

## Modi to Inaugurate virtually "25th Edition Bengaluru Tech Summit" on Nov 16



**ARUN KUMAR RAO**  
*Bengaluru*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually Inaugurate the event "The 25th Edition of the Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS)", which will be held between Nov 16 to 18 in Bengaluru. The theme of the summit is Tech4NexGen, main focus will be on Electronics, IT, deep tech, Biotech and startups.

C N Ashwath Narayan, Karnataka minister for IT/BT announced during the curtain raiser press conference that BTS is an event that is recognised globally and puts India on the global technology map. He said "The Summit this year will focus on future technologies".

## If convicts of Rajiv Gandhi murder case can be released, why not Sikh prisoners: Dhami

**SGPC PRESIDENT'S SHARP REACTION AFTER SUPREME COURT DECISION**

**AMRITSAR:** Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami while reacting to the Supreme Court's Friday decision to release convicts in Rajiv Gandhi's assassination case, raised question that why the same is not being applied in the cases of Sikh political prisoners?

In a statement issued he alleged that the discriminatory policy being adopted by governments for the Sikhs stands exposed with this decision. The SGPC President in a statement issued from his office said that the Sikh community has been raising voice for the release of Sikh political prisoners locked in different jails in the country for the last three decades, but the governments have turned a deaf ear.

He claimed that there are many such cases, in which the governments have been merciful to the prisoners with heinous



charges like murder, rape, etc. On the other hand, injustice is being done to the Sikh prisoners. He said even release of Prof. Devinderpal Singh Bhullar is possible with a consent from the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi, but the Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal is adopting anti-Sikh sentiments. Similarly, the case of Bhai Gurdeep Singh Khera's release is pending with the Karnataka government, he said.

Harjinder Singh Dhami said that despite the clear instructions by the Supreme Court in

the case of death sentence commutation of Bhai Balwant Singh Rajoana, the governments are working under the policy of ignorance and opposition.

SGPC President said that if the Tamil Nadu state government can recommend the release of accused involved in Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, then why not the same can be done by the governments of various states, including the Centre and Punjab for the release of Sikh political prisoners. He also said that the release of the Sikh prisoners is linked to completion of their sentences, while the convicts of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination have been released prematurely. This discrimination is deeply hurtful to Sikh sentiments, about which governments should be serious.

Dhmi has expressed objection to Congress for including Sikh Genocide accused Jagdish Tytler in the state election committee for the elections of Municipal Corporation Delhi.

## Active Covid cases in country dip to below 12000



**NEW DELHI:** India logged 842 new coronavirus infections taking the tally of COVID-19 cases to 4,46,64,810, while the active cases dipped to below 12000, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The death toll climbed to 5,30,520 with six fatalities which includes five reconciled by Kerala. One death has been reported from Rajasthan in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprises 0.03 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate increased to 98.78 per cent, according to the ministry website.

A decrease of 435 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

## Punjab Govt prepares action plan to curb Lumpy Skin Disease, Mega Vaccination Campaign from Feb '15

**CHANDIGARH:** Punjab government led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has chalked out action plan for early prevention of Lumpy Skin Disease in cattle to counter any other possible wave. The Group of Ministers (GoM) closely gauging the current situation and planning future strategies to prevent revival of LSD in the state, on Friday decided to start vaccination campaign from February 15, 2023.

During the meeting of the GoM here at Punjab Bhawan, Finance Minister Advocate Harpal Singh Cheema and Animal Husbandry Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar directed the officials of Animal Husbandry department to start the vaccination drive from February 15 and vaccinate the entire 25 lakh cattle population in the state by April 30, 2023. The Ministers asked the officials concerned to make a foolproof strategy to complete this vaccination target in the given time frame. They also directed officials to immediately initiate the process for procuring about 25 lakh doses at cost effective prices from the Veterinary Biological and Research Institute, Hyderabad (Telangana).

In the meeting, experts from the Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU) apprised the group of ministers that the national rate of buffaloes being affected by lumpy skin disease was around 1



to 1.5 percent. On this, the Cabinet Ministers directed to form a 7-member committee to decide on need of vaccinating buffaloes with goat pox vaccine. The committee would comprise 3 experts from GADVASU, 2 from Animal Husbandry Department, Punjab 1 each from Animal Husbandry Department, Government of India and Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Bareilly. This committee would submit its report and recommendations within 10 days.

The minister also informed the governor about the manufacturing of ethanol and methanol from bamboo and other biomass. "There is a need for setting up an International Design and Production Centre of Bamboo. Therefore, a plan is on the anvil to push the bamboo and cane-based industries to utilise the abundant bamboo and cane resources of North East, especially Assam," he added. Gadkari also stressed the need for agro-processing, especially pineapple, which has huge export potential.

## Forex kitty drops by USD 1.09 bn to USD 529.99 bn

**MUMBAI:** India's foreign exchange reserves dropped by USD 1.087 billion to stand at USD 529.994 billion for the week ended November 4 on a sharp decline in the gold reserves, the Reserve Bank said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the reserves had swelled by USD 6.561 billion to reach USD 531.081 billion, making it the biggest weekly jump in a year. In October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused by global developments. Foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves, decreased by USD 120 million to USD 470.727 billion during the week to November 4, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. The gold reserves dropped by USD 705 million to USD 37.057 billion, it said.



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## BJP cannot be fool people of Himachal: Kharge

**BANUTI (SHIMLA):** Addressing his first public meeting in the Himachal Pradesh assembly elections, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday trained his gun on the BJP and said it may have been able to be fool people across the country with its "jumlas" but cannot do so in the hill state.

"People here are educated, understand everything and take a considered decision (in voting)... The BJP may have been able to be fool people all over the country with its jumlas (rhetoric) of Rs 15 lakh in bank accounts and jobs, but it cannot do so here," Kharge said. Kharge, who was elected Congress president recently, arrived in Himachal Pradesh Tuesday



evening and addressed his first public meeting in Banuti in support of party candidate from the Shimla Rural assembly constituency Vikramaditya Singh.

The Congress is seeking to wrest power from the BJP in the hill state, where the Congress and the BJP have governed alternately for the past many decades. Polling in Himachal Pradesh

will be held on November 12 and the counting of votes will be taken up on December 8. Kharge said the Congress would fulfil all its promises made in the manifesto and the restoration of the old pension scheme would be the first decision of its government, if elected. "As far as the old pension scheme is concerned, it will be implemented first. This is our promise and if given a chance this will be the first thing to be done," he said.

Restoration of the old pension scheme, 300 units of free power, a Rs 680-crore StartUp fund, one lakh jobs and Rs 1,500 per month for women aged between 18 and 60 years are among the promises the Congress has made in its manifesto for the Himachal Pradesh polls.

## Congress can never unite India: BJP

**GANDHINAGAR:** In a scathing attack on Rahul Gandhi's ongoing 'Bharat JodoYatra', BJP leader Sambit Patra on Wednesday said the Congress can never unite the country.

The BJP spokesperson was speaking to reporters here ahead of Gujarat state Assembly polls.

"There is trust on one side, which provided development for 27 years with the help of people of Gujarat. Every Gujarati takes pride that he has built Gujarat. You (Gujaratis) had put your trust in Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he reciprocated by giving you hospitals, electricity, water and roads," said Patra.

## Nitin Gadkari meets Assam Governor; discusses infra projects

**GUWAHATI:** Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday met Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi and discussed the infrastructure projects being undertaken across the state.

According to a Raj Bhawan release, Gadkari informed Mukhi about his ministry's plan of harnessing the Brahmaputra for transportation and promotion of business. He also spoke about the opportunities of the river for trade activities and harnessing its tremendous power generation potential.

The minister also informed the governor about the manufacturing of ethanol and methanol from bamboo and other biomass. "There is a need for setting up an International Design and Production Centre of Bamboo. Therefore, a plan is on the anvil to push the bamboo and cane-based industries to utilise the abundant bamboo and cane resources of North East, especially Assam," he added. Gadkari also stressed the need for agro-processing, especially pineapple, which has huge export potential.

## D Raja calls for Left unity to defeat BJP-RSS



**PATNA:** CPI general secretary D Raja called for an alliance of a "united Left" with "regional and other secular parties" for defeating the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing party workers at the CPI's Bihar headquarters here on Thursday, he spoke of the "grave danger" posed to secularism and democracy by the Narendra Modi government at the Centre. "The current regime represents an unholy alliance of big corporate houses and fascist,

communal forces represented by the BJP-RSS", said the veteran leader who last month got re-elected as the CPI's general secretary. He expressed concern over the "rise in incidence of atrocities against dalits and minorities". He fulminated against the rupee having "fallen to a degree that it is now hurting national prestige". "There is an unprecedented level of unemployment, and the country is among the worst-ranked ones on the global hunger index.

## Sensex rallies 1181 points to close at lifetime high

**MUMBAI:** Equity benchmark Sensex vaulted 1,181 points to close at its all-time high on Friday, in lockstep with a rally in global markets after lower-than-expected US inflation data fuelled hopes that the US Fed may go slow on rate hikes. A sharp recovery in the rupee and unabated foreign capital inflows further bolstered sentiment, traders said. The 30-share BSE benchmark zoomed 1,181.34 points or 1.95% to settle at 61,795.04 -- surpassing its previous closing peak of 61,765.59 hit on October 18, 2021. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty rallied 321.50 points or 1.78 per cent to finish at 18,349.70. HDFC twins topped the Sensex gainers' chart, jumping up to 5.84 per cent, following reports that the merged entity's weightage could increase in MSCI global indices. Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, TCS, Wipro, Tata Steel and Reliance Industries were among the other winners, rising as much as 4.51 per cent.



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## Supreme Court of India upholds 10% EWS quota in 3-2 verdict

Supreme Court Monday upheld by a 3:2 majority, the 103rd amendment to the Constitution introducing a 10 per cent reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in admissions to educational institutions and government jobs.

While Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela M Trivedi and J B Pardiwala agreed that the amendment does not violate the basic structure of the Constitution, Chief Justice of India U U Lalit and Justice S Ravindra Bhat dissented.

Justice Maheshwari, in his judgment, said that the reservation is an instrument of affirmative action by the state to ensure an all-inclusive march towards



the goal of an egalitarian society while countering inequalities. "It is an instrument not only for inclusion of socially and educationally backward classes to the mainstream of society, but also for the inclusion of any class or section so disadvantaged as to be answering the definition of a weaker section. In this background, reservation singularly on economic background does

not violate any essential feature of the Constitution and does not cause any damage to the basic structure of the constitution," he said.

Exclusion of the reserved categories from the EWS quota does not violate the equality code and does not in any manner cause damage to the basic structure of the constitution, he added. Justice Maheshwari also opined

that the reservation for EWS over and above the 50 per cent cap does not violate the basic structure, saying that the ceiling, by itself, is not inflexible and in any case only applies to reservation envisaged by Articles 15(4), 15(5) and 16(4) of the Constitution.

Concurring with Justice Maheshwari's statement, Justice Bela M Trivedi said that the amendment enabling state to make special provisions for EWS other than Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes is required to be treated as an affirmative action on the part of the Parliament for the benefit and betterment of the EWS category.



SGPC HONOURS BRITISH ARMY OFFICIALS

# Efforts of Defense Sikh Network UK regarding Sikh identity within British Army commendable: Dhami

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

A delegation of British Army officers today paid obeisance at Sachkhand Sri Harmandar Sahib in Amritsar. On this occasion, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami honoured the members of the British Army delegation with the Guru's blessing Sirpao (robe of honour) and religious literature at the information center of Sri Darbar Sahib.

On this occasion, Major Daljinder Singh Virde, a British Army officer associated with Defence Sikh Network, UK, also presented Gutka Sahib of Nitnem (daily Sikh prayers) prepared by Defence Sikh Network and the literature published

regarding Sikh identity and turban in the British Army to SGPC President.

SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhami while appreciating the efforts being done by the Defense Sikh Network, UK within the British Army said they are working to revive old Sikh tradition as laid by our elderly. He said a Nitnem Gutka Sahib has been prepared, which is a part of the uniform of Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs working in the British Army, which they have to safekeep with themselves. He said that such unique Gurbani scriptures were given to the Sikh soldiers by the British Army even during the World War and the Defense Sikh Network is doing this work on the same lines.

Dhmi said that the Defence Sikh Network has also worked



for the three branches of the British Army i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force, which is a big achievement. SGPC President also appreciated the work being done by Dr. Gurinderpal Singh Josan, Chairman of Saragarhi Foundation.

in the British Army to publish literature on Sikh identity and turban, so that the next generation can get information about Sikh culture and heritage. He said that the Defense Sikh Network has also made a major contribution in determining the different colours of turban

for the three branches of the British Army i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force, which is a big achievement. SGPC President also appreciated the work being done by Dr. Gurinderpal Singh Josan, Chairman of Saragarhi Foundation.

# Congress to win Himachal elections: Ashok Gehlot



Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Thursday exuded confidence that the Congress will score a clear victory in the Himachal Pradesh assembly elections.

He also predicted a Congress victory in Gujarat, which goes to the polls in December. "There is a good atmosphere in Gujarat. There is also a very fierce wave against the BJP government. Our campaign is going well. Five (Pariwarsankalp) yatras were taken out, the reaction of the people seen in these yatras is indicative of this," the senior Congress leader said. "The unemployment situation is terrible in Gujarat," he said.

He also criticised the BJP over the Morbi tragedy in which a suspension bridge collapsed, resulting in the death of more than 130 people, and alleged

that the state government is not conducting any enquiry into it. Gehlot said the state government should conduct a judicial inquiry into the accident. He said Gujarat has a "stubborn" chief minister. On the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', he said, "Rahul Gandhi has started a movement, lakhs of people are joining it," adding that the yatra has bothered the

BJP. "Rahul Gandhi has started this yatra on the issues of inflation, unemployment and peace and harmony and the yatra is having a huge impact," he said. The state government has started preparations for the upcoming budget and a round of consultation with the stakeholders will be held in a meeting on Thursday, Gehlot said.

# Narcotic Cell ASI arrested while smuggling opium at Ambala



SATISH HANDA

CIA staff of Haryana Railway Police (GRP) on an information arrested Niranjn working as Assistant Sub Inspector in Narcotic Cell of Haryana police on an information that he is going to collect a consignment of drugs at the entry gate of railway station Ambala by a drug supplier in a white car. Chasing by a team of CIA staff saw a white car bearing registration number 24-Z 0012 in which a person sitting in the car came out to meet Niranjn ASI sitting in his car. Meanwhile, police team immediately conducted raid when Niranjn attempted to flee and did not hesitate even to hit members of police team they were saved and his vehicle hit a motorcycle of a policeman, but in due course of time he was overpowered by members of CIA staff, which during checking recovered a packet containing 250 gm opium and Rs 29000 currency notes.

Paramjit Singh Sub Inspector GRP CIA Staff told that the person sitting in white car arrived to deliver opium was identified as Shiv Narain a resident of Jhalawad in Rajasthan. Niranjn ASI was produced in the court on Tuesday and remanded to police custody. Shiv Narain during preliminary investigation disclosed that he brought opium from main supplier Kripal Singh residing at Jhalawad in Rajasthan. During preliminary investigation Jai Narain told that he arrived to deliver opium against payment Rs 29000.

# Congress trusts old warhorses, while BJP reposes faith on younger faces in Himachal

SHIMLA: The grand old party Congress is trusting its old warhorses to leave behind greenhorns to win the November 12 electoral race in Himachal Pradesh.

In comparison, the state ruling BJP has largely discarded its veterans and reposed faith on comparatively younger faces with the slogan 'criva-jadlega' (electoral traditions will change), meaning to buck the trend to sweep the polls alternatively as both arch rivals ruled the state from 1985.

Out of 412 candidates in the fray, 24 are female and 388 male candidates. A total of 55, 92, 828 voters will elect their representatives. Of them, 193, 106 are first-time voters in the age of 18-19 years. There are 121, 409 voters above 80 years, while 56, 501 voters with



disabilities.

Among the eldest candidates, the Congress has fielded Col. Dhani Ram Shandil (82) from Solan; Chandra Kumar (78) from Jawali; Kaul Singh Thakur (76) from Drang; Thakur Singh Bharmouri (75) from Bharmour; Kishori Lal (75) from Bajinath and Khimi Ram (73) from Banjar.

Congress rebel Gangu Ram Musafir (77), who has been denied the party nomination, is contesting as an Independent from Pachhad.

The youngest candidate is Piyush Kanga (26), who is in

fray from Bilaspur as an Independent.

The others are Chaitanya Sharma (28) of the Congress from Gagret; Jabna Kumari (29) of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) from Nachan; Puja (29) of the Himachal Jan Kranti Party from Bharmour; Manisha Kumari (30) of AAP from Nrupur; Kishori Lal (31) of the CPI(M) from Karsog; Vikramaditya Singh (33) of the Congress from Shimla (Rural); and Deep Raj (34) of the BJP from Karsog.

The BJP has denied the party ticket to 11 sitting legislators, shifting seats of two ministers, denying nomination to one minister, whose son has been fielded from that constituency, and swapping seats of two veterans owing to infighting.

# Crop stubble burning cases 10 times more in Punjab than Haryana



SATISH HANDA

Political leaders in Haryana and Punjab are blaming each other for burning crops stubble in open that caused spread of pollution at Delhi, National Capital Region (NCR) and other towns in Northern part in the country. According to available data, cases of crop stubble burning cases have been detected nearly ten times more in Punjab as compared to Haryana state. Political leaders

has now started playing politics in this regard due to spread of pollution at Delhi, NCR and few other towns reached beyond danger point as such few families residing at Delhi and in NCR have started temporarily shifting to safe places till situation improves since it has become difficult for aged persons, children and heart patients to live in thick smoke and pollution.

Kuldeep Singh Dhillon Agriculture Minister in Punjab

# Rs 2.05 lakh fine recovered for burning crop waste in 82 cases

District administration Ambala conducted 191 raids on receipt of satellite capture reports of burning crop wastes in open in the district and detected 82 cases of burning crop remains at the spot in a day or so imposing fine worth Rs 2.05 lakh on farmers violated directions not to burn crop waste in the field spreading smoke harmful for health of residents in the area. Information reveals, as a result of burning crop wastes in open Air Quality Index (AQI) of area adversely affected in past one week identified as 190 on October 28, 254 on October 29, 231 on October 30, 246 on October 31, 241 on November 1 and 255 on November 3.

recently in a statement blamed Haryana government responsible for pollution in the atmosphere at Delhi and NCR, whereas J.P. Dalal Agriculture Minister Haryana refuted allegations and pointing out at Arvind Kejriwal said that instead of playing politics he should take necessary steps to impose strict ban over crop stubble burning in open since number of such

cases is nearly ten times more in Punjab as compared to Haryana state. Information reveals that number of such crop stubble burning cases has witnessed nearly 31% drop this year as compared to previous year in Haryana, whereas on the other hand nearly 18% increase in burning cases has been recorded in Punjab this year as compared to previous year.

# Nearly 70% children, over 60% women in Haryana detected anemic



SATISH HANDA

People residing in Haryana state are known for having healthy diet as compared to other states in the country. According to a recent National Family Health Survey report nearly 60% women in Haryana have been found suffering from shortage of blood in their body. Similarly, more than 70% children in age group between six months to six years were found anemic in the state which is a matter of deep concern. However, a relief as regard availability of blood in their body was observed in case of male adults during present survey as compared to the survey report in year 2015-16.

Family Health Survey Report 2020-21 maximum shortage of blood in body was observed in children of age group between six months to six years due to non-availability of nutritive diet in the state, whereas 60.4% women were found in the state having less than 12 gm blood in their body whereas at the same time large number of females in state are participating in commonwealth and Olympics games bagging medals for the country. However, in case of men the situation is bit satisfactory since only 18.6% male youths between age 15 and 49 were found having less than 13 gm blood in their body which included 29.9% youths having less than 13 gm blood.

# Slain Shiv Sena leader cremated as per Hindu rituals

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

The last rites of Shiv Sena (Taksali) leader Sudhir Suri were performed as per Hindu rituals at Durgina Shivpuri cremation ground here today amidst sizable crowd including local politicians besides Durgina Temple management Temple Management Committee president Lakshmi Kanta Chawla and former Deputy Chief Minister Punjab O.P. Soni.

Earlier, the funeral procession of dead Hindu leader was passed through different locations of the city before reaching the Crematorium in the presence of heavy police security. However, till yesterday, the family was not ready to cremate the body unless their demands were met. But last evening, Police commissioner Arun Pal Singh and Deputy Commissioner Harpreet Singh Sudan visited the family and expressed condolence and assured them of a government job and security cover including the proposal of martyr status to Suri to be sent to the Government.

# United Sikh Mission spearheads 'Mission for Vision' in Punjab

FW DESK

The United Sikh Mission (USM), a philanthropic charitable organization incorporated in Southern California, USA and also operating in Punjab has organised seven camps in the districts of Ferozepur, Sangrur, Barnala, Kapurthala, Jalandhar and S.A.S Nagar (Mohali) beginning 15th of October, 2022.

Apart from free eye check-up camps, there were provisions and arrangements for free medicine for eye care, free spectacles, free eye-surgeries and free meals provided along with pre and post operative care. A total of 2627 OPD's, 265 Surgeries, 1684 Spectacles and 2533 Medicines were provided in the seven camps held so far.

Rashpal Singh Dhindsa, Chairman, USM while sharing the schedule for the year 2022-23 said that more than 50 free eye check-up camps covering more than 400 villages across Punjab, have been planned during the time span of five months.

United Sikh Mission is active in the State of Punjab since 2005 and has organized absolutely free-of-cost Eye Health-care camps in rural Punjab. Dhindsa informed that added that this "Mission for Vision" is a selfless act of serving the community across the State of Punjab. Rashpal Singh shared that they generate their own funds from donations from various sponsors who are mainly NRIs who want their native village to be benefited



by these camps. He expressed that it is all Guru's will and as humans they are trying to help other humans irrespective of their religion, gender and caste.

Elaborating further, he added that their mission is to empower communities worldwide by addressing disparities in healthcare needs by eliminating preventable medical illnesses while promoting peace and community to spread prosperity and kindness towards humanity. He appealed to come forward for any help, no matter how small it is, as a step in the right direction, especially in matters of healthcare.

Avtar Singh, Board of Director and Camps management, USM, India informed that this is an inspiring journey of a philanthropic American Sikh, Rashpal Singh and his team towards establishing a mission to improve eye-healthcare to serve his community in Punjab. He further elaborated that from 2005 they started with one camp and have since held 463 eye camps to the present day.

# SVB arrested over 150 officers in 2022 involved in corruption

SATISH HANDA

Haryana state government has changed policy not to spend more than 10% amount over developmental projects finalized by the government since projects of value worth crores of rupees are hanging incomplete in the state due to delayed construction work by Public Works Department (PWD) in the state for one reason or the other as such cost of production most of such projects increased too much and according to a study by State Vigilance Bureau this is usually due to government officers working in these projects found involved in corruption. Investigation by State Vigilance Bureau (SVB) revealed that huge amount of payments were released by the concerned department officers without work done by the contractors or receipt of material from suppliers on the basis of fake bills as such only in Ambala district construction work in more than half dozen important projects have come to halt in the absence of funds sanctioned for these projects since a major amount alleged spent over these projects went into the pockets of contractors raised fake bills and officers as well staff working in the departments and work in large number of such projects have stopped giving rise to conflicts.

Information reveals that in most of the cases the cost of projects hanging in between have to be revised by the government officers in the department for completion of such incomplete projects misusing their powers even increased up to 170% in few cases showing additional work done in these projects. According to new policy by the state government in case the cost of tender exceeds 10% the department will have to re-tender for additional work in favour of some other contractor to avoid corruption. Talking to media persons Abhijit Kapoor Director General SVB told that more than 150 corrupt officers and employees working in government offices including working in the rank of HCS and Chief Engineer working in the state caused inconvenience to government as well as public deprived of to avail benefits of large number of important projects were found involved in corrupt practices during investigation by SVB in nearly 143 cases, arrested and sent behind bars.

Abhijit Kapoor told that Chief Minister has given free hand to SVB for the arrest of corrupts in government offices made situation bad to worst in past few years as such the department has released two toll free numbers 1800-180-2022 and 1064 and a Watts App number 094178-91064 for lodging complaints against corruption.



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# Police commissioner constitutes three members SIT

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

Police Commissioner Amritsar, Arun Pal Singh here today said, "The murder of Shiv Sena (Taksali) leader Sudhir Suri committed by the accused Sandeep Singh who was under the severe influence of social media which instigated the accused to commit such a heinous crime. It was a hate crime".

Addressing the press conference here today, Commis-

sioner said that in the light of prevailing circumstances a special three members SIT has been constituted with DCP detective (chairman), ADCP city-3, Incharge CIA staff Amritsar and incharge Anti gangster Staff.

He said that during the investigation process of SIT, if the name of any one or involvement appears, action would be initiated as per law against him.

However, the last rites of Shiv Sena (Taksali) leader



Sudhir Suri were performed as per Hindu rituals at Durgina Shivpuri cremation ground here today amidst sizable crowd including local politicians besides Durgina Temple

management Temple Management Committee president Lakshmi Kanta Chawla and former Deputy Chief Minister Punjab O.P. Soni.

Earlier, the funeral procession of dead Hindu leader was passed through different locations of the city before reaching the Crematorium in the presence of heavy police security.

However, till yesterday, the family was not ready to cremate the body unless their demands were met. But last evening, Police commissioner

Arun Pal Singh and Deputy Commissioner Harpreet Singh Sudan visited the family and expressed condolence and assured them of a government job and security cover including the proposal of martyr status to Suri to be sent to the Government.

Yesterday amidst tight security the autopsy of Shiv Sena (Taksali) leader Sudhir Suri was carried out. Videography of postmortem was also done by the Government Medical College.



# Modi attends celebrations of 553rd Prakash Utsav of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

FW DESK

Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, attended and offered prayers at celebrations of the 553rd Prakash Utsav of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji at New Delhi. The Prime Minister was felicitated with Shawl, Siropa and Sword.

Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister greeted everyone on the auspicious occasion of Gurburab and Prakash Parv and also for Dev Deepawali. He expressed his happiness for having the opportunity to celebrate key Prakash Parvs such as 350th Prakash Parv of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, 400th Prakash Parv of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji and 500th Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. "The inspiration and blessings of these auspicious occasions is enhancing the energy of New India... Light of

every Prakash Parv is acting as a source of light for the country", the Prime Minister said. He elaborated that the meaning of Prakash Parv that has been followed by the Sikh community has shown the nation path of duty and dedication. The Prime Minister expressed his devotion to the Guru Kripa, Gurbani and Langarkaprasad on these holy occasions. "This not only provide inner peace but also keeps the will to serve with dedication, eternal", he added.

Prime Minister said "Inspired by Guru Nanak Dev Ji's thoughts, the country is moving ahead with the spirit of welfare of 130 crore Indians." Prime Minister recalled Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teaching for spiritual enlightenment, worldly prosperity and social harmony. The Prime Minister said that in the



Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal, the country has rekindled the sense of pride in the nation's glory and spiritual identity. In order to encourage the supreme sense of duty, the country has decided to celebrate this phase as Karvaya Kaal. During this phase of Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal work of equality, harmony, social justice

and unity is undergoing with Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas, he said. "Direction that we received from Gurbani is tradition, faith as well as vision of developed India also", he added.

Underlining the eternal relevance of Guru's teaching the Prime Minister said "the glory



of the Amrit that we have in the form of Guru Granth Sahib, its significance is beyond the limits of time and geography. We also see that when the crisis gets bigger, the relevance of these solutions increases even more. In times of unrest and instability in the world, the teachings of Guru Sahib and

the life of Guru Nanak Dev Ji are showing the direction to the world like a torch." The Prime Minister said that the more we live the ideals of our Gurus, the more we embody a sense of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat', the more we give importance to the values of humanity, the louder and

clearer the teachings of Guru Sahibs will reach every person.

Prime Minister said that through the blessings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, we got the opportunity to serve the great Sikh heritage during the last 8 years. He mentioned laying the foundation stone of the ropeway from Gobind Ghat to Hemkunt Sahib and Delhi Una Vande Bharat Express for the convenience of the pilgrims. Electrification of places related with Guru Gobind Singh Ji and Delhi Katra Amritsar expressway will also add to the convenience. The government is spending more than 35 thousand crore rupees on this, he informed. The Prime Minister said that these efforts go beyond amenities and tourism potential, this is about the energy of our places of faith, Sikh heritage, service,

love and devotion. The Prime Minister also mentioned steps like opening of Kartarpur Sahib corridor, bringing back the holy forms of Guru Granth Sahib from Afghanistan and declaring 26 December as Veer Bal Diwas in the honour of the supreme sacrifice of the Sahibzaades. "In the memory of the sacrifices made by the people of our Punjab in Partition, the country has also started Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas. We have also tried to create a way to give citizenship to the Hindu-Sikh families affected by the Partition by bringing in the CAA Act", the Prime Minister said. "I have full faith that, with Gurus' blessings, India will keep enhancing the glory of its Sikh tradition and will keep moving on the path of progress", the Prime Minister concluded.

## Al-Qaeda-linked terror suspect from West Bengal arrested in J&K



FW DESK

Jammu and Kashmir Police arrested an Al-Qaeda operative, hailing from West Bengal, from the Ramban area of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

One grenade was recovered from his possession. "An Al-Qaeda operative was arrested by Ramban Police from the Ramban area. He is a resident of West Bengal. Further investigation going on," J-K Police said. "Ramban police arrested one Al-Qaeda operative and recovered one grenade. An FIR u/s 7/25 Indian Arms Act, Sec 4 Explosive Act and 13, 20 UAPA has been registered at Ramban PS." The Jammu and Kashmir Police also arrested two hybrid terrorists from Kenusa Bandidora in the Union Territory. They have been identified as Irshad Ganaie alias Shahid and Waseem Raja of Kenusa.

## Thirteen year-old girl raped by six minors in Assam

**KARIMGANJ:** A 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped by six minor boys in Assam's Karimganj district and all the accused have been arrested, police said on Wednesday. All the six boys are aged between the age of 13 to 15 years, the police said. Additional Superintendent of Police, Karimganj, Partha Pratim Das said that the incident took place on November 1 in the Ramkrishna Nagar area of the district.

## Narcotic smuggler arrested, 100 kg poppy seized in JK

**JAMMU:** A narcotic smuggler was arrested and 100 kilograms of poppy was seized from his vehicle in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district on Thursday, officials said. On a tip-off, a police team intercepted a four-wheeler at Raya Morh in Vijaypur belt for searching, they said. Police recovered 100 kgs of poppy, which was concealed in a fabricated cavity inside the vehicle, they said. The driver of the vehicle identified as Shahwaz of Rajouri has been arrested, however, his associate namely Rakesh Kumar managed to escape from the spot, they said.

## Himachal Election: PM Modi links Congress to instability, corruption and Scams

**CHAMBI (HP):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday that Himachal Pradesh needs a stable and strong government of "double engine", and linked the Congress with "instability, corruption and scam".

Addressing a rally in Kangra district, which has the largest number of assembly seats in the state, Modi targeted the Congress, accusing it of "betraying" the state when it was in power at the Centre.

He said the Congress, the main challenger to the BJP's bid to retain power in the hill state, will only hamper development if it is elected to power in the state.



Noting that the Congress is left with power in only two states, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, Modi asked people if they have ever heard of them making news for development. It is the reports of internal feuds of the Congress which come out from there, he added.

There is so much anger against the Congress that people

have not elected it to power in many states for decades after defeating it, Modi said, citing the examples of Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal among others.

The BJP is identified by people with good governance and pro-poor policies and that is why it is elected to power again and again, he said, referring to the party's win in several states where it was in power.

The BJP only says what it can do and then works with its full strength to implement with its promises, he said. Other political parties are still rooted in family rule and vote bank politics, he said.

## PM Modi Inaugurate glitzy 'Terminal 2', unveil '108 Kempegowda statue' & flag off 'Vande Bharat', in Bengaluru



ARUNKUMAR RAO Bengaluru

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Karnataka's capital Bengaluru on Friday. Modi who is on a hectic four-hour visit to Bengaluru flagged-off South India's first Vande Bharat Express and 'bharat gaurav Kashi Darshana' train at KSR railway station. PM Modi later inaugurated Kempegowda International Airport's world class "Terminal 2", and later unveiled the 108-feet high bronze statue of Bengaluru founder Nadaprabhu Kempegowda.

On his arrival at HAL Airport here, Modi was received by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, union minister Prabalad Joshi and other cabinet colleagues. Modi first paid floral tributes to the statues of saint-poet Kanaka Dasa (on account of Kanaka) On his arrival at HAL Airport here, Modi was received by Karnataka Governor Jayanti, his birth anniversary today, and Maharshi Valmiki at the Vidhana Soudha premises here.

PM Addressing huge public rally began his speech by greeting the public in Kannada. He said, on flagging off "5th Vande Bharat Express" is a symbol that India has now left the days of stagnation behind. "Today Karnataka got

its first made-in-India Vande Bharat train. It is the new identity of New India. Launch of Vande Bharat Express gives a glimpse of how Indian Railways will grow in the 21st century. Modi lauded Karnataka's capital Bengaluru. He said, the city represents the 'Start-up' spirit. "Across the world, India is known for its start-ups. Karnataka is also getting benefited from the investment happening in the country," he said.

PM inaugurated glitzy 'Terminal 2' of KIA. Spread over a total area of 2,55,645 square metres, the T-2 in its first phase will have 22 contact gates, 15 bus gates, 95 check-in solutions and 17 security check lanes. There will be nine customs hand baggage screening. The gate lounge will have a seating capacity of 5,932. Phase 1 of T-2 has a capacity of 25 million passengers per annum. T2 is new eco-friendly terminal in which bamboo has been extensively used has been built at an estimated cost of Rs 5,000 crore, New infrastructure facility at the KIA will cater to 2.5 crore passengers annually. It is designed as a tribute to the Garden city of Bengaluru and the passenger experience is meant to be a "walk in the garden". Passengers will travel through 10,000 sqm of green walls, hanging gardens, and outdoor gardens.

## Grand felicitation to new AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge as "Sarvodaya Samavesha"

ARUN KUMAR RAO Bengaluru

After becoming AICC president Mallikarjuna Kharge, who arrived in Bangalore for the first time was given a rousing welcome by AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, KPCC President DK Shivakumar, Assembly Opposition Leader Siddaramaiah, Party MLAs and office bearers received the newly elected national president at Kempegowda International Airport. A Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka and a former Union minister, Kharge was elected as the Congress president on



October 19 after defeating rival Shashi Tharoor. 80-year-old Kharge, a Gandhi family loyalist, hails from Kalaburagi in Karnataka. He is the first Congress president in the last 24 years from the non-Gandhi family. He is the second AICC

president from Karnataka, the first one being Nijalingappa. He is also the second dalit Congress president after Jagjivan Ram. Speaking at felicitation ceremony "Sarvodaya Samavesha" organised by KPCC, He urged his party leaders in Karnata

## Heroin worth Rs 1 crore seized in Mumbai, one arrested

**MUMBAI:** A 24-year-old man was arrested with 270 grams of heroin worth Rs 1.09 crore from suburban Goregaon, city police said on Thursday.

A team of Dindoshi Police Station saw a man moving suspiciously during patrolling on Wednesday evening, an official said. As the police team approached, he tried to flee on his motorbike and was apprehended, he said.

Police found 270 grams of heroin in the bag he was carrying. Further probe is on.

## Maharashtra first state in India to provide houses to Transgenders



DOMINICK RODRIGUES Mumbai

For the first time in India, the transgender community in the country received a big boost when the Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde recently said that 252 houses of Nagpur NIT will be given to them with finance towards this purpose being made available from the finance department with immediate effect.

Shinde said that this same effort should be carried out for the transgender community

in the Mumbai Metropolitan region with the assistance of CIDCO and MHADA.

Urging for giving a facility to +Koliwad+ (Fisherfolks areas) in Mumbai, he said transforming the metropolis for tourism meant beautifying roads, heritage buildings, traffic islands, chowks alongside highlighting local and food culture.

Shinde also called for robots being pressed into service for scavenging works carried out by local self-governing bodies. Noting that scavenging for

solid waste meant labourers going deep in the tanks and manual scavenging should be ended, he urged for usage of jetting or suction pumps in cleaning such drainages and avoiding loss of life in this regard.

The chief minister also expressed grief over a mishap in which "Warkaris" (pilgrims) were crushed to death while on a walking pilgrimage to Pandharpur on the Miraj road for Kartik Yatra. He also announced assistance of Rs 5 lakh each for the families of the deceased warkaris, besides calling from an inquiry into the incident.

During his visit to Maharashtra and Panchgani, the chief minister directed the local administration to prepare a blueprint for further boosting tourism in 27 "C" grade tourist spots including religious and pilgrim sites through increased facilities as they witness various festivals and yatras on a large-scale.

## Rahul Gandhi visits Gurudwara Nanded Sahib in Maharashtra



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi resumed his Bharat Jodo Yatra in Maharashtra on Tuesday morning after visiting a Gurudwara in Nanded district as the foot march entered into its 62nd day. The Congress MP visited Gurudwara Yaadgari Baba Zoravar Singh Ji.

On the occasion of Guru Nanak Jayanti a few hours after the yatra entered Maharashtra Monday night from neighbouring Telangana. At the Gurudwara Sahib, Gandhi prayed for harmony and equality. Rahul Gandhi resumed his march, he was flanked by senior Maharashtra Congress leaders including former Chief Ministers Sushilkumar Shinde and Ashok Chavan, state party Chief Nana Patole, and other leaders like Balasaheb Thorat, Manikrao Thakre and Naseem Khan. The march will proceed from to Atkali in Biloli city of Nanded. Gandhi is scheduled to halt at Godavari Manar Sugar Factory ground in Biloli for night stay, a party functionary said.

On Monday night, as Gandhi said entered Maharashtra holding a 'flaming torch' (mashaal), he said small and medium businesses suffered due to the Centre's wrong policies like demonetisation and poor implementation of the Goods and Service Tax. Gandhi said

during his stay in Maharashtra over the next 15 days, he will listen to the voice of the state and also its pain, and asserted no force can stop his yatra, that began on September 7 from Kanniyakumari (Tamil Nadu) and will culminate in Srinagar.

The 3,570-km-long yatra led by the Congress MP reached Deglur in central Maharashtra's Nanded district from Telangana. During his stay in the state, Gandhi will address two rallies as part of the cross-country march aimed at reviving the party.

Gandhi said the march started two months back from Kanniyakumari and it will stop only at Srinagar after hoisting the tricolour. "No force can stop this yatra," asserted the former Congress president, whose party was a strong political force in Maharashtra for several decades and was a constituent of the three-party ruling coalition till June this year. Gandhi said the aim of the yatra is to bind the country together and highlighted major issues before the country. "The reality of India is that the country cannot give employment to its youth, even if it is willing. On one hand there is unemployment, on the other hand there is inflation," he said, attacking the Narendra Modi government.

## Hard core criminals running criminal network from Ambala central jail

SATISH HANDA Ambala

In spite of all efforts and strictness in Ambala central jail in which nearly 1500 prisoners undergoing sentence or under trial are presently lodged, which include those involved in murder cases, members of gangster groups allegedly running criminal network from inside the jail and several important persons and senior officers indulged in corrupt practices as such jail staff has not been able to control illegal possession of mobile phones with prisoners running criminal network from jail. On the orders of Ambala Central jail superintendent Sanjeev Patter a search campaign was carried out in all the barracks of the jail from

where mobile phones and other related items were recovered.

The Ambala Central Jail authorities continued search and recovered a total of eight mobile phones, including an Apple iPhone from barracks where a suspended HSC officer Anil Nagar, a VIP Subrat Khanna Managing Director of Naraingarh sugar mill, members of dreaded gangster gangs and other more than eight high-profile men are lodged found carrying mobile phones. While talking to media persons Patter a strict and disciplined officer said unauthorized facilities were being given to the high-profile men living in A-class and B-class barracks against the prison rules unlike in alphabetical order. He said, on October 17 these barracks



were vacated and they were lodged in other barracks as per the rules and while checked such illegal mobile phones were recovered and surprisingly that an iPhone was being used inside the jail. Prior to this, jail security staff had recovered as many as nine mobile phones packed in a box lying near boundary wall in jail. Not only this, on getting information that a checking campaign has been

launched in the jail by security staff prisoners burnt down or damaged 22 mobile phones themselves later found by jail security staff. Inspector Gaurav Punia, SHO Baldev Nagar police station Ambala City said the complaint was received, an FIR was lodged and investigation started.

Past scenario reveals, Ambala central jail has always remained on headlines in newspapers several time due to incidents witnessed inside this jail including frequent clashes between criminal groups inside jail, recovery of drugs from prisoners several times raising a question over how drugs reached inside the jail campus having tight security, suspecting involvement of jail staff in this regard.

## Haryana CM inaugurates road projects worth Rs 141 crore

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday dedicated two projects -- a newly constructed flyover at Basai Chowk and the Mahavir Chowk underpass built near the main bus stand in Gurugram -- at a cost of Rs 141 crore.

"After coming to power in 2014, the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) was formed to expand the development and related schemes in the city so that development plans are made here only. The development of Gurugram has gained momentum with the formation of GMDA," Khattar said.

The Chief Minister also mentioned the projects of road in-



frastructure and metro expansion and said that the metro line expansion connecting the Palam Vihar area to Dwarka Sector-21 of Delhi has also been approved. Referring to other major projects being implemented through GMDA, Khattar said that the construction of multi-specialty Sheela Mata Medical College and Hospital with a capacity of 650 beds is underway in Sector-102 at a cost of about Rs 542 crore.



## Public service broadcast is a good idea

**T**weaking guidelines for television channels operating in India, the Union Cabinet has laid down some norms on content as well. In the time of polarising opinions, heated debates and narrow targeting of ideas on television, it said wherever applicable, the channels would have to broadcast content on themes of national importance and socially relevant issues for at least 30 minutes every day. The 'Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022' point out that as airwaves and frequencies are public property and need to be used in the best interest of society, a company with permission to operate in India, barring foreign channels, will have to air content in the service of the public. The themes that have been picked out include education and spread of literacy, agriculture and rural development, health and family welfare, science and technology, welfare of women and weaker sections of society, protection of environment and of cultural heritage and national integration. These are subjects on which a lot more awareness is necessary. In its 2008 recommendations, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India had suggested a public service obligation, which the Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry has taken on board. But there is no clarity yet on compensation norms and who is going to foot the bill for the public service component on TV. The guidelines, with effect from November 9, replace those in operation since 2011 with the Government announcing a host of measures which include making India a teleport hub. The Government has done away with the requirement to seek permission for live telecast of events; only prior registration of events will be necessary for live telecast. As for the 30-minute public service slot, I&B Secretary Apurva Chandra has said stakeholders will be consulted regarding the modalities, which will have to be sorted out.

### LETTERBOX

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

“SUCCESS IN BUSINESS DOES NOT DEPEND ON WHAT YOU SAY, WHAT YOU HEAR, WHAT YOU FEEL, WHAT YOU SEE. IT DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU DO”



- Selwyn D. Goodwin

## THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. CHAENG/2001/03736

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA

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

PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA OWNER\* : FW MEDIA

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

EDITOR\* ABDUL WASEY

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



**RK RAGHAVAN** BELIEVES POLICING SHOULD BE DONE WITH TALENT AND RESOURCE SHARING, NOT SQUABBLING

## Stop politicising the policing



**I**ndia's Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) convened a conference in late October in the capital, which saw the participation of the Union Home Minister, a few State Home Ministers and police chiefs. West Bengal did not send its highest officials citing its preoccupation with pooja-related issues. The Delhi conference was a very important occasion aimed at improving the quality of policing in the country through an exchange of ideas. The seriousness of the subject required attendance at the level of the Chief Minister and if some States gave it a miss, it was an unfortunate development and a reflection of the lack of seriousness in matters of governance affecting public order and crime.

The debate now over the way the Tamil Nadu police have handled the case of a blast in Coimbatore that happened recently, and a possible terror-related plot, also fits in this scene and is relevant to the state of law and order in the State and elsewhere. There is a section of influential public opinion which has accused the Tamil Nadu government of having been slothful and delayed handing over investigation of the incident to the National Investigation Agency (NIA). This has been rebutted by the State Director General of Police (DGP) who said that his force could not abruptly abandon the investigation and had to do the preliminary investigation to facilitate an NIA take-over. The exchange of barbs by the two sides has been an unfortunate and avoidable development and the truth lies in between. Rather than getting into a slanging match, what is more important is an examination of the standard operating procedures in place, the identification of lacunae and the initiation of corrective measures.

The first Home Minister of independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, would have been dismayed by the politics in Centre-State relations in a matter as serious as policing. He placed great value on professional

policing, one reason why he insisted on an elitist and well-trained corps such as the Indian Police Service (IPS) which worked alongside the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). He was under immense pressure from various quarters, which included his own Congress party, to disband both the Indian Civil Service and IP, but as a distinguished and astute visionary, he was steadfast in his belief. Subsequent events proved him right. Despite all their faults, the two all-India services have been a cementing force and have greatly contributed to establishing nationally accepted standards of governance, especially in the area of law and order.

The passage of 75 years in a free India has more than established that a country of our proportions and diversity will need objective policing by a highly trained police force. It is distressing that there is still conflict between the MHA and some States over utilising talent in the IPS and the sharing of resources available in the States. Both sides have to be partially blamed for this unfortunate state of affairs. Petulance in personnel management has occasionally affected administration in the Centre and States.

### Camaraderie is essential

It is a no-brainer that in this, New Delhi is

the senior partner in what is definitely a collaborative relationship. But there have been actions over the decades that have inflicted many deep wounds on public order. These have been situations that have demanded large numbers of well-trained policemen. The Centre has always chipped in with support from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). There have also been other outfits such as the Border Security Force (BSF), the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) which have also worked in tandem with the State Police. Therefore, it makes sense that the MHA and State Police stop squabbling but explore how best to forge a strong camaraderie. We are also witness to frequent spats between States and the Centre over the use or alleged misuse of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Here again both parties have to share the blame. But the basic point that has been ignored is that crime and bureaucratic corruption have inter-State ramifications and only a national agency can bring in a much-needed and wide perspective. Insensitive action by a few States to withdraw consent to the CBI to function in a State smacks of politics and vindictiveness, which diminishes the fight against public servant graft.

### What is lacking

'Police' is a State subject under the distribution of powers laid down in the Constitution of India. But that does not mean the Union government has no say in the matter. Training and technology are two areas where the Centre does greatly contribute to sharpening police ability to combat terrorism and other major public disturbances. The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad is a world-class institution that has resources and the professional excellence which are generously available to State police forces. Petty squabbling reduces the exchange of ideas and goes to attenuating the police response to difficult situations that require police assistance. This is why we need a political leadership that does not get bogged down in petty differences but promotes a free exchange of talent and resources between New Delhi and the States.

There is no point in blaming a DGP if he or she does not respond to a situation in a professional manner. The DGP looks up to the Chief Minister for directions. If the latter is driven by political considerations and gives unprofessional instructions, there is very little that the DGP can do. Despite all that the Supreme Court of India has done to insulate the chief of police from political caprice, the truth is that a DGP is perilously placed vis-à-vis the Chief Minister and his or her party men. It is lamentable that public opinion in the country has not asserted itself to impart a better sense of policing at all levels of government. I do not foresee any change in this unfortunate situation in the years ahead.

*RK Raghavan is a former Central Bureau of Investigation Director who teaches 'criminal justice and policing' at the Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana. Views are personal*



**DR. DINESH BASWAL** EXPLAINS WHY IT IS CRUCIAL TO EMPOWER FRONTLINE HEALTH WORKERS

## The frontliners of the first 1,000-day window of life

**A**ddressing malnutrition is critical to laying a strong foundation for human development. Optimal maternal nutrition and infant and young child feeding are the most effective set of interventions in reducing child deaths and disease, preventing malnutrition, in determining cognitive development, and in eventually enabling adult life productivity. Specifically, the first 1,000 days of life, i.e., from conception to the first two years of a child's life, are key as this phase presents a critical window of opportunity in ensuring optimal growth, development, child survival and lifelong health and nutrition. In fact, 80% of brain development takes place in the first 1,000 days of life.

To address the persistent high burden of malnutrition, India has been undertaking several policy and programmatic efforts which include the flagship programme, the Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyaan (launched in April 2018) under the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). Its overarching goal is to improve nutritional outcomes by focusing on capacity building, improvement of service delivery, community mobilisation and participation, use of technology, and inter-ministerial/inter-departmental convergent planning and review. Additionally, there has been an enhanced focus on documentation of interventions coverage in the first 1,000 days, such as registration of pregnancies, antenatal checkup, and exclusive breastfeeding, as compared to the situation in 2015-16.

### Evidence-based interventions are key

Evidence tells us that for bringing about change in nutrition outcomes, evidence-based interventions need to be delivered with high coverage, continuity (over the first 1,000 days of life and across delivery channels), intensity



(multiple interactions), quality and equity. The health and nutrition status of women, including the weight and haemoglobin level, age at conception, and levels of multiple micronutrients during periconception period, are critical determinants for the child's health.

The criticality of preconception care, i.e., care before pregnancy, is acknowledged. In 2018, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare worked with Maharashtra and UNICEF to introduce the first ever primary health-care innovation programme to promote the health of women during the preconception period, in the Peth and Sinhar blocks of Nashik district, Maharashtra. During the programme, which was completed in 27 months, it was seen that promoting the health of adolescent girls and women not only promotes the health of the newborn but also prevents low birth weight, preterm birth, and newborn deaths. Its success led to it being scaled across several districts in the State.

All such interventions are delivered to the last mile by the network of the frontline work force: Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), Auxiliary Nurse-Midwives (ANMs) and Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), who play a key role in empowering the com-

munity on health planning and action. In many geographies, they are the only access point to basic nutrition and other health services. They are critical in promoting healthy practices, providing on-ground support, and improving awareness.

### In Uttar Pradesh

For example, during the Poshan Pakhwa in March 2022, in a remote village in Uttar Pradesh, all families with children below two were able to overcome age-old fears and misconceptions and get their children weighed at the anganwadi centre after multiple and continuous efforts by the AWWs, supported by the lady supervisor. Mothers and other relatives such as grandmothers and also fathers were enlightened about the benefits of regular weight measurement. Men, especially fathers, also play a very important role in ensuring maternal and newborn health (MNH). They can influence behaviours and good practices around MNH within their households and communities. Studies show that mothers are 1.5 times more likely to receive prenatal care in the first trimester when fathers are involved during pregnancy.

Back to the story. The AWW and the lady

supervisor found support in the panchayat pradhan who had organised a community-level meeting a day before the start of the Poshan Pakhwa. All the men, women, AWWs, ASHAs, schoolteachers and community elders were involved to generate awareness on the benefits of weight measurement, early detection of undernourished children and ensure the weighing of all eligible young children.

Similarly, lady supervisors of a block in Unnao district (Uttar Pradesh) have ensured that AWWs have not only received growth monitoring devices but also been trained to measure and record body weight accurately. Community mobilisation meetings to ensure coverage of all eligible children were also organised.

These stories of change from Uttar Pradesh that have been driven by frontline workers and their supervisors resonate with the joint efforts of AWWs and ASHA workers in a remote village bordering Nepal, who ensure the regular weighing of each child every month to detect deficiencies in early growth.

The momentum for strengthening the nutrition system focuses on regular skilling, supportive supervision and motivation of frontline workers to deliver contextualised, focused and quality nutrition and health services. These along with data-driven reviews must be prioritised and sustained at the programme level. Because of their deeper understanding on the issues and needs at the grassroots level, their contribution to community health is much more. It is crucial to empower our frontline workers who are driving change at the last mile.

*Dr. Dinesh Baswal is Lead MNCH and Chief of Party Saksham MNCH Accelerator supported by USAID (South Asia Hub). He is also former Deputy Commissioner Maternal Health, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Views are personal*



### BOOKS: REVIEW

## Book helps communicate emotional issues with kids

**F**acilitating communication with children on complex emotional topics through personalised stories, publishing house Merlinwand's new book 'The Land beyond the Moon' is the story of a young boy coping up with the loss of his beloved pet.

Illustrated by Rajyashree Sarkar and written by Parvathy Raveendran, the book, which marks the completion of one year of the publishing house, allows children to name the protagonist and also decide the course of the story.

It is the story of a young boy who is finding it hard to deal with the loss of his beloved dog, and how his flight of imagination takes him to a far away fictitious land. In his sojourn, he is seen spinning across asteroids, fighting with supervil-

lains, and eventually learning the important lesson of letting go.

"Writing this story during the worldwide lockdown, there was nothing I wished more than to fly away for a little while and to meet the people I missed. I wanted to create a world where this was possible, for small readers with winged imaginations to travel to. "All my story does is to provide them with a suitable vehicle, a horizon and a magical puff of wind. The rest is all their doing," said the author, who has previously also written a play, titled "Witches".

Along with choosing and naming the central character, the reader can choose which of the three worlds they want to explore — 'Forest of Zee' on a winged horse Peggy, the 'Kingdom of Zee' on

'All my story does is to provide them with a suitable vehicle, a horizon and a magical puff of wind. The rest is all their doing'

the friendly carpet Rasul, or the 'Planet of Zee' on the futuristic spaceship Dhruva.

According to the illustrator Sarkar, she always wanted to work on projects that involve love between children and animals, and the book gave her the perfect opportunity.

"When I was given the opportunity to illustrate the story, I was thrilled. I worked with Parvathy and Sudarshan to help them render their ideas or vision into the illus-



'The Land beyond the Moon': By Parvathy Raveendran and Rajyashree Sarkar Merlinwand 42 pages; Rs1,499

reader can choose which of the three worlds one wants to explore — Forest of Zee on a winged horse Peggy, the Kingdom of Zee on the friendly carpet Rasul, or the Planet of Zee on the futuristic spaceship Dhruva.

The Land Beyond the Moon is the perfect book to teach kids about the importance of relationships, especially the relationship of humans and pets.

"The Land beyond the Moon" is currently available for sale on online and offline stores.

Parvathy is a writer, editor and teacher. Theatre, art history, poetry and photography, good food and magic of all kinds have been lifelong pursuits, leading her on whimsical and often unusual routes to little-known corners of the country.

Her play titled "Witches" was shortlisted for "The Hindu Playwright" award and read at the British Council. She has also written book reviews for Scroll magazine.



# Euler Motors ties up with Shriram Transport Finance Company for retail EV financing

KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
New Delhi

Euler Motors, an electric vehicle company, has partnered with India's leading asset financing company, Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited (STFC) to drive accessible retail financing of the Euler HiLoad EV. The partnership will aim at PAN India deployment of the company's Euler HiLoad EVs, with lower interest rates and high loan to value (LTVs) for customers in retail.

With an objective to deploy over 20,000 EVs in the next two years, Euler Motors will utilize STFC's financing and segment expertise in the transportation sector and make commercial EVs mainstream on Indian roads. Both organisations will also closely work to drive awareness on benefits of EVs for Indian



customers. On this partnership, Saurav Kumar, Founder and CEO, Euler Motors, said, "Euler Motors is committed to provide the most powerful EVs, and develop a robust ecosystem, of which EV financing is a critical element. We are thrilled about having one of India's largest asset financing Non-Banking Finan-

cial Companies (NBFCs), STFC on board with us. Their expertise in asset management and customer know-how will help us deploy EVs at scale across our target markets. Together, we aim to make the Indian commercial vehicle segment progressive and emission free." This also marks STFC's first

association with a commercial EV company in India. Speaking on the tie-up,

P. Sridharan Joint MD, Shriram Transport Finance said "Shriram has the right financing solutions and customer connect in rural and semi-urban areas and, we expect to achieve tremendous success in E-CV financing in the next 3-5 years. The partnership with Euler synergises with our approach in the EV financing space and is part of our overall strategy to provide finance to the entire e-commerce logistics supply chain ecosystem."

On the tie-up, Umesh Revankar, VC & MD, Shriram Transport Finance said, "India's logistics industry is embracing EV wholeheartedly and adopting it at a faster rate than expected. Shriram has seen rising awareness and queries for Electric CV financing and we believe it will

be a prominent fuel going ahead and would want to support the consumer's adoption of EVs. Our partnership with Euler would encourage customers to engage in the last-mile delivery of goods. As Euler strengthens its infrastructure, STFC would complement it with financing solutions."

Euler Motors is enabling a robust EV ecosystem for India, with its high performance and powerful EVs, Euler HiLoad and supportive infrastructure across charging and servicing. The Euler HiLoad EV, launched in 2021, comes with the industry first 12.4 KWh active liquid cooled battery technology, highest range at 151 Km per charge and highest payload capacity at 688 kg. With this, Euler Motors aspires to become a dominant player in the Indian commercial vehicle segment.

# Medical Cyclotron Unit to be set up in Odisha

**BHUBANESWAR:** To provide quality cancer care to patients in Odisha, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved a proposal for establishment of a state-of-the-art Medical Cyclotron unit in the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital (TMCH) being established in the NISER campus at Jatni, an official said.

The state government would fund up to Rs 150 crore for the purpose. The unit would add to Odisha becoming a research and applications hub of Medical Cyclotron in the entire South East Asian region, Health and Family Welfare secretary, Shalini Pandit said on Thursday.

Replying to a media query about the unit, Pandit said: "Medical Cyclotron unit will produce radioactive isotopes required for critical imaging procedures such as PET scan for treatment of cancer and other critical ailments. Presently, Odisha obtains isotopes on a daily basis from Hyderabad, Mumbai or Kolkata and the isotopes



remain effective for only a few hours..."

The Health secretary said the proposed state-of-the-art Medical Cyclotron facility would be unique to the entire South East Asian region. It would be "operated by NISER in close collaboration with TMCH, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre, Kolkata, Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology, Department of Atomic Energy and Atomic Energy Regulatory Board.

Official sources said that the outcomes of this world class standard facility would include, production of medically useful

radioisotopes, South East Asian regional facility for research and development in the area of nuclear medicine, national facility for research and development in the areas of basic sciences, skill development of human resources for applied science courses, and training of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

In another development towards Universal Health Care, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also approved the provision of "Corpus Fund" for hiring super specialists and specialists doctors on contractual basis for Capital Hospital, and BMC Hospital in the state capital here.

# Centre Govt deregulates uplinking of satellite TV channels



**NEW DELHI:** The government on Wednesday unveiled revised uplinking and downlinking guidelines for satellite television channels that allows Indian teleports to uplink foreign channels and scraps permission for live telecast of events. The Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022, which have been approved by the Union Cabinet, also makes it mandatory for television channels to telecast content in national and public interest for 30 minutes every day, Information & Broadcasting Secretary Apurva Chandra told reporters here.

The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), an apex body, organized a webinar that focused on Women's Health - Issues & Solutions to cascade awareness and disseminate knowledge of the overall health and well-being of women as they constitute a large part of the community. The webinar, which is a part of Illness to Wellness initiative, highlighted the need for healthcare, which includes nutrition, to be gender neutral.

# Nutrition and Health needs should be gender neutral says health experts at the webinar on women's health

FW DESK  
New Delhi

It focused on the fact that

women are at higher risk than men for illnesses like Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, migraines, and strokes due to biological factors as well as the social disadvantage that exists against them in clinical care and medical research.

Anil Rajput, Chairperson, ASSOCHAM CSR Council, in his welcome address, "Women play a vital role in our communities and despite being an important pillar of society, they have poor health outcomes around the world with repercussions not only for them, but also for their families."

Highlighting on the need for a holistic and comprehensive



approach to achieve better health for this crucial 50% of the population, Rajput said, "women must have access to knowledge about the spectrum of her health conditions and a system of self-care to experience

positive health and well-being" He added, "If women are ensured good medical care and health, then it will benefit all of us. In fact, the Government of India (GoI) has come out with several schemes that aligns with

women health and development, which includes Janani Shishu Suraksha Sahay Yojna, Kasturba Poshan Sahay Yojna and Ayushman Bharat."

Dr. Meena Chhabra, Senior Physicians, Senior Visiting Consultant & Diabetologist, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi shared her insight on how women's health is ignored and how they are traditionally considered to be the caretaker of the family. Stressing on the need to bring women issues on the forefront, she added that women should be involved in clinical trials and address health concerns for their own well-being.

# IndiGo announces Itanagar as 75th domestic destination

With a view to enhance connectivity in the northeast, IndiGo announced Itanagar as its 75th domestic destination in the 6E network.

The airline will commence flights between Mumbai-Kolkata-Itanagar from November 28 from Itanagar's newly opened Donyi Polo Airport.

Indigo also announced a second weekly frequency between Kolkata and Itanagar commencing on December 3.

Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy and Revenue Office, IndiGo, said, "We are pleased to announce Itanagar, as the 75th destination on the 6E network. This will be IndiGo's first destination in Arunachal Pradesh. Over the last few years, IndiGo has focused on increasing accessibility in the northeast and now connects seven out of eight states in the region. The direct flights between Kolkata-Hollongi, will connect Arunachal Pradesh to the rest of the country and international destinations on the 6E network."

The Donyi Polo Airport is located 15 km away from the Itanagar city centre.



The increased access to Arunachal Pradesh, also known as the 'land of dawn-lit mountains', will boost tourist footprint at destinations like Ita Fort, Jawaharlal Nehru Museum, Namdapha National Park, and places like Tawang, which is a beautiful town positioned between the Gudpi and Chong-Chung Mi ranges.

Travellers can explore the glacial lakes of Sangetser and Sela, meditate in the Taktsang Gompa, or go up the Gorichen Peak, which offers excellent views of the town below.

According to IndiGo, these flights are designed to cater to business and leisure travellers who are constantly on the lookout for new and affordable flying options to access destinations which help in building businesses and are known for their tourist attractions.

# Maharashtra increases subsidy outlay for small scale businesses



**MUMBAI:** Maharashtra Industries Minister Uday Samant on Thursday announced increase in the subsidy outlay for small scale businesses to Rs 550 crore for the current financial year.

Entrepreneurs who need capital of Rs 10 to 20 lakh to start a business will benefit from this subsidy, he said.

Earlier, the outlay was Rs 141 crore per year. "If such a person employs at least two persons, and we have set a target of helping at least 25,000 people, then we will be able to generate employment for 75,000 persons," the minister said.

"Earlier, such subsidy was available only to people from SC, ST categories, women, Divyang

persons and retired military officials. The state has now decided to extend the subsidy to OBCs, Nomadic Tribes and minorities as well," Samant added.

The government has received complaints about nationalised banks not extending support to such loan applicants, the minister said, adding that now the subsidy will also be distributed through district cooperative banks.

The state would hold a conference chaired chief minister Eknath Shinde where top 30 industrial houses in the country will be invited to either set up their plants in the state or expand the existing ones, Samant said.

# Panipat entrepreneurs preparing for Textile Trade Fair in Germany

SATISH HANDA

Panipat handloom, textile, blanket and carpet industry have name and fame not only in India but all over in the world. The industry had to suffer a lot in past two years due to spread of epidemic outbreak in the country as well as all over the world in the absence of getting orders and frequent lock down declared by the government. The manufacturers of Panipat textile industry as well as exporters in the town hope to get good orders not only from domestic markets but also from export markets this year and has started preparations for coming Textile Trade Fair to be held at Frankfurt with effect from 10th January to 13th January 2023 displaying handloom and home furnishing products and with effect from 14th January to 16th January 2023 displaying textile products at Hanover in West Germany. This Trade fair held every year in Germany has been regarded as most prestigious fair in the world attracting large number of manufacturers as well as buyers from all over world, but the fair was postponed during past two years due to epidemic outbreak spread all over world and the



manufacturers as well as exporters of Panipat hope to get handsome orders in coming Trade Fair.

Lalit Goyal President of Panipat Exporters Association told that exporters from Panipat has booked 150 stalls in coming trade fair which attracts huge crowd of visitors from each and every country and according to past scenario Panipat manufacturers are getting good orders to make them busy for the whole year and at present busy to prepare new samples for displaying in coming trade fair. Goyal said, Panipat manufacturers failed to get good response in past two years in spite of the fact they were able to procure few orders through video conference displaying samples of

their products but could not execute these orders timely due to frequent lock down declared by state government as well as labour problem since most of the workers had left for their native places during epidemic outbreak.

Talking to media persons Goyal predicted good response from coming trade fair at Germany this year due to lack of business procured by them in past two years. The General Secretary of Carpet Manufacturers Association at Panipat Anil Mittal too expressed hopes to receive good orders for carpets manufactured at Panipat in coming trade fair at Germany, especially in newly introduced carpets manufactured from yarn.

# IONIQ5 to be Hyundai's first model for India under new platform



Car maker Hyundai Motor India Ltd on Thursday said it would launch the Hyundai IONIQ5 as the battery electric vehicle (BEV) built on the electric global modular platform (E-GMP).

"Our Electric Mobility campaign in India began in 2019 with the launch of India's first Electric SUV, the Hyundai KONA Electric. As we continue to challenge possibilities and dynamics of mobility, our pursuit of innovation is perfectly reflected in the E-GMP. With the introduction of E-GMP to India, we will be able to provide customers with advanced battery electric vehicles, derived from a platform that is modular,

scalable and versatile," Unsoo Kim, MD & CEO, said.

Driving the pump-to-plug revolution, Hyundai will pioneer the development of future electric vehicles with this dedicated BEV platform that is now coming to India with the Hyundai IONIQ 5.

According to Hyundai, the E-GMP platform comprises of vehicle chassis that includes the battery, motor and power electric system.

The battery system features an advanced battery pack offering high range, while the bi-directional charging plug allows the high-voltage battery to power various electronic appliances.

# Masai School Ropes in Cricketer Mithali Raj and former football player Baichung Bhutia as investors

ARUNKUMAR RAO  
Bengaluru

India's fast-growing JobTech institute, Masai School, has announced its latest fundraise, where the company has raised \$10 million in a Series B round led by Omidyar Network India along with existing investors including India Quotient and Unitus Ventures, with the addition of Alteria Capital.

The round saw participation from 2 of Indian sports stalwarts, the face of women's cricket, Mithali Raj, and the legendary footballer Baichung Bhutia, as investors and partners for an undisclosed amount.

Addressing Media Prateek Shukla, CEO and Co-founder, on Fundraise "This is an opportunity time for us to pick up our series B funding, and we are excited to work with our new partners and our current investors alike. Our mission remains to build the country's largest employable tech workforce. The last 3 years have been proof of our com-



petency in bridging the tech skill gap for over 800 tech companies who have hired more than 2000 alumni. The company is launching their first up-skilling course, MasaiX1, which aims at fast tracking growth for software developers in India to meet demand of tech professionals in Global Capability Centres and Sr. Software Developer roles. Masai is also launching the Scholar Program, targeted at college students to supplement their college education with industry necessary skills. The Scholar Program, which

is a prepaid program, is being rolled out by the company's subsidiary, Preleaf, acquired by Masai in December 2021.

Speaking at the press event, Mithali Raj said, "The common thought in India is that when a woman chooses her sporting career, her personal life takes a backseat. However, with Masai, Every individual gets yet another chance to have another career option apart from sports and excel in it.

Baichung added, "Access to quality education should be a fundamental right, irrespective of spending potential. And I

commend Masai for creating India's largest outcome-driven higher education institute that identifies untapped talent and makes them job-ready through a pay after placement mode. I am delighted to partner with a brand like Masai that is making a tangible contribution to the future of the youth in this country.

Masai School is a Series B funded JobTech startup based out of Bangalore. As India's fastest growing career institute, Masai offers software development and data analytics programs, designed to train and mold learners into skilled and job-ready professionals. Learners are enrolled at zero upfront fee and cost after placement of 5 LPA or more. The program is open to any individual irrespective of their educational background. As the country's sole outcome based institute, the company is working in partnership with National Skill Development Corporation to create a framework for skill based tech learning in India.

# Your smartphone will soon help map surroundings for better 6G experience



A team of US researchers, including one of Indian-origin, is developing smartphone technologies that will use current 5G and emerging 6G wireless systems to "view" and map the surrounding environment.

The mapping of a user's surroundings will improve communication by identifying obstacles that may interfere with radio frequency signals.

"Mobile wireless devices have gradually transformed from mere communications devices into powerful computing platforms with a multitude of sensors, such as cameras and radars," said Harpreet Dhillon of Virginia Tech's College of Engineering.

In fact, when we shop for a new phone, the main considerations are its camera quality, processing speed, memory, and sensors, whereas hardly anyone checks its frequency bands.

"Since this is one of the first efforts to do a comprehensive analysis of vision-guided wireless systems, this is expected to have a significant impact on future generations of wireless," Dhillon said in a statement.

Professors Walid Saad and Dhillon of the College of Engineering have been awarded a \$1 million grant to develop vision-guided wireless systems.

Researchers at the Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) want to take the multi-use function of cellular devices

even further with the idea of a "vision-guided wireless system."

"In 6G, we talk about high-frequency bands like terahertz," said Saad.

These high frequencies can deliver high rates and high bandwidth, but the problem is that the signals are susceptible to blockages -- much more so than low frequencies.

"Those frequencies can be blocked by things like your arms moving, or someone standing in a room with you," Saad added.

Although these blockages might seem irritating, they could actually be the key to helping researchers improve communication.

"If a communication system fails because the signal is blocked, at sub-THz bands, we can still use that information to sense the environment and know that there was an obstacle in the first place," Saad noted. "Then, with both situational awareness and other side information - like a picture of the room - we can use that multimodal data to communicate better."

These vision-guided systems can be used in several applications, such as enhancing the performance of tomorrow's wireless systems (6G), creating a more advanced and interactive gaming environment, and pushing the boundaries of extended reality while exploring the metaverse.



# For every rupee depreciation, software exports increase by \$250 mn: SBI Chief Economic Advisor

India's software export revenue and remittances act as a strong counter cyclical buffer against increase in current account deficit (CAD) due to hike in global oil prices and rupee depreciation, said the State Bank of India's (SBI) Chief Economic Advisor.

In a research report Dr. Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser, SBI, said for every rupee depreciation, software exports increase by \$250 million. Ghosh said contrary to the expectations, the Q1FY23 Balance of Payments (BOP) numbers have shown that a strong counter-cyclical buffer in the form of service exports and remittances.

For example, in Q1, India's CAD was expected to breach \$30 billion/3.8 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), but the actual numbers came in at 2.8 per cent of GDP.

The positive surprise was because of strong remittances and software exports, the CAD got a lift of 60 basis points, Ghosh said. "We expect that if such trends of strong remittances and software exports have continued (RBI data suggests software exports in Q2 was strong) in Q2, and India's CAD comes in below the threshold level of 3.5 per cent of GDP in Q2, the CAD for FY23 could still be closer to 3 per cent benchmark and not in excess of 3.5 per cent of GDP," he added.

Also, forex reserves could jump by another \$5 billion as swap transactions reverse and thus having a positive impact on rupee as is being currently witnessed, he noted. To understand the factors that are impacting India's CAD, Ghosh worked on the structural vector autoregressions (SVAR) model. With oil forming 30 per cent



of India's import bill, it has a major impact on macro-economic variables. An increase in oil import price impacts directly the trade deficit and consequently CAD gets widened. That apart, it also results in inflation. According to Ghosh, the SVAR model introduces a counter cyclical response to increased oil prices in the form of software service exports that is impacted positively because of a rupee depreciation.

"Although, remittances are positively impacted, we have not considered them in our SVAR model because of data volatility." The results of the SVAR model clearly gives an idea of the negative impact of oil price shock on CAD, inflation and growth in one direction and the positive impact of software

exports on CAD as a result of rupee depreciation.

In particular, a positive shock to oil prices leads to immediate and sharp increase in CAD, which dissipates completely in about eight quarters. The trade deficit also increases up to two quarters after the initial positive oil price shock, he said. "This implies that India's trade deficit may already have been adversely impacted for first half of the current fiscal because of the oil price shock," Ghosh said.

In case of GDP, positive shock to oil prices leads to immediate decline, which however starts reversing after third quarter and completely dissipates after the seventh quarter.

"This implies that India's first half GDP growth in FY23 could have been impacted because of oil price shock. Most interestingly, rupee dollar exchange rate also gets impacted and it de-

preciates slightly after increase in oil prices till three quarters following which it starts appreciating," he said.

As a result, the rupee outlook is likely to improve in Q4 of FY23.

The impact of oil price on consumer price index (CPI) inflation will dissipate after four quarters and it means that the CPI inflation outlook for FY24 will be consistent with RBI's forecast of 5 per cent.

Ghosh said India's software exports are on the rise with the share of offside mode of exports by Indian IT service companies increasing to 88.8 per cent in FY22 compared to 82.8 per cent five years ago.

Ghosh said a \$10 increase in crude oil prices leads to increase of 40 bps in CAD, 50 bps in CPI and 23 bps decline in growth with software exports acting as counter cyclical buffer.

# Crypto exchange Coinbase to lay off more employees amid FTX saga



Leading crypto exchange Coinbase will lay off more employees soon in a fresh round of job cuts, as the world of crypto faces another existential threat after the FTX collapse, the media reported.

The layoffs were announced internally and the company is likely to sack around 60 employees in its recruiting and institutional onboarding teams, reports The Information.

The cuts will take place as the broader cryptocurrency industry is in chaos due to the ongoing FTX saga which has alarmed investors and caused cryptocurrency values to sink further.

Crypto exchange FTX Founder and CEO Sam Bankman-Fried told investors that he needed emergency funding to cover a shortfall of up to \$8 billion due to withdrawal requests received in recent days.

Leading crypto exchange Binance has also pulled out of the FTX acquisition deal.

Even before the FTX problems, Coinbase had tried to control costs, as declining crypto trading volumes were hurting this year's revenue, the report said. In June this year, the crypto exchange company had announced to lay off 18 per cent of its workforce, or about 1,100 jobs amid the economic downturn.

Brian Armstrong, CEO and co-founder had said that while the company tried its best to get this just right, in this case, it was clear that it had overhired.

Now, the collapse of the FTX crypto exchange has brought yet another round of threats to the crypto industry as a whole amid Bitcoin and other crypto values dropping further.

# US Treasury Secretary meets FM Nirmala Sitharaman



**NEW DELHI:** US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who is on a day-long visit to India, on Friday met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ahead of the 9th meeting of the India-US Economic Financial Partnership here. "Union Finance Minister Smt. @nsitharaman and US Treasury Secretary Dr. @SecYellen meet ahead of the 9th meeting of India-US Economic Financial Partnership #EFP, in New Delhi, today," the Finance Ministry said in a tweet. During the meeting, both sides will discuss issues of mutual interest, including climate finance, multilateral issues, India-US cooperation at G20 under India's presidency, taxation, supply chain resilience, global economy and macroeconomic outlook.

# No new Rs 2,000 notes printed from 2019-2022, says RTI reply

An RTI reply has disclosed that no new Rs 2,000 denomination currency notes were printed during 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

The RTI application filed by IANS disclosed that the Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran (P) Ltd printed 3,542,991 million pieces of Rs 2,000 notes in the financial year 2016-17, which drastically came down to 111.507 million notes in 2017-18 and was further reduced to 46.690 million notes in 2018-19.

The RTI reply received from the Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran (P) Ltd revealed said that '0' number of Rs 2,000 denomination currency note was printed in 2019-20,

2020-21 and 2021-22.

The Reserve Bank of India had introduced the Rs 2,000 note after the government announced the demonetisation move that banned old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 currency notes on November 8, 2016.

A recent reply in the Parliament (on August 1) said that the number of fake currency notes of Rs 2,000 denomination seized in the country as per NCRB data increased substantially between 2016 and 2020, from 2,272 to 2,44,834 pieces.

As per the data, the total number of fake Rs 2,000 notes seized in the country in 2016 was 2,272, which increased to 74,898 in 2017 before reducing



to 54,776 in 2018. The figures in 2019 stood at 90,566 pieces, before registering a remarkable spike in 2020 to 2,44,834 pieces.

The RBI had issued

banknotes in all denominations in the Mahatma Gandhi Series - 2005 with a new exploding numbering pattern in 2015. With these visible security features, the general public can

easily distinguish a counterfeit note from a genuine one.

More than 90 per cent of the counterfeit notes detected in the banking system were of low quality and none of the major security features were compromised. Details of security features of these notes are displayed on the RBI website for the general public, said the reply in the Parliament.

It also said that the RBI issues various instructions to banks on measures to safeguard against forged currency notes. The central bank regularly conducts training programmes on detection of counterfeit notes for employees/officials of banks and other organisations handling large amount of cash.

# Gold climbs Rs 294, silver rises Rs 638



**NEW DELHI:** Gold price in the national capital rallied Rs 294 to Rs 52,663 per 10 grams on Friday amid a rise in price of the metal in the international market, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had closed at Rs 52,369 per 10 grams.

Silver also surged by Rs 638 to Rs 62,858 per kg.

"MCX Gold December future has surpassed the crucial resistance of Rs 52,100 and headed towards the next target of Rs 52,600," said Vinay Rajani, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities. In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,761 per ounce while silver was up at USD 21.89 per ounce.

# Coinbase has \$15 mn deposits on FTX, now acquired by Binance

Leading cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase has clarified that it only has \$15 million worth of deposits on FTX to facilitate business operations and client trades, as it faced a partial outage.

In its bid to provide clarity, the company said regardless of whether the Binance and FTX transaction completes, "we have very little exposure to FTX and we have no exposure to its token, FTT". "We have no exposure to Alameda Research, and we have no loans to FTX," Coinbase said in a blog post late on Tuesday.

The clarification came as Binance on Tuesday announced a non-binding, letter of intent to acquire FTX for an undisclosed sum. Binance founder and CEO Changpeng Zhao (CZ) said in a tweet thread that FTX asked for their help. Binance and FTX teams were working on clearing out the withdrawal backlog.

Coinbase further said that as a publicly traded company in the US, "we've also built our busi-



ness in a way that allows us to be transparent about our track record, balance sheet strength, and effectively and prudently manage risk for our customers and ourselves". "We are in a strong capital position. We ended Q3 with \$5.6 billion in total available USD resources, including \$5 billion in cash and cash equivalents," the company informed. "Fragmented, opaque regulatory frameworks in the US are driving crypto to offshore unregulated exchanges, where looser regulations can put customers at risk," it said.

Meanwhile, Coinbase said it was monitoring a fix for a partial outage that affected its website and app for around two hours.

# Union Bank of India secures 2nd Rank in EASE reforms

Customer centric approach, adoption of modern technologies and extensive digital channels/products to facilitate integrated and inclusive banking was the highlight of the Bank's performance in Q1 FY22-23

Union Bank of India is ranked 2nd as per the report on EASE Reforms Index for Q1 FY 2022-23 by Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Union Bank of India is the 2nd Best Bank in adopting reforms prescribed for Public Sector Banks.

Union Bank of India has been doing well in areas related to enabling various digital journeys for customer convenience, upgrading analytics & big data capabilities for personalized offerings & proactive reach out to customers, adopting modern technology capabilities for integrated banking experience, collaborative banking for higher efficiency, employee development and better governance measures



resulted in Bank improving its rank up by two notches.

The performance of PSBs is measured on five themes under EASE 5.0, in which, Union Bank of India has set the benchmark under the two themes i.e., 'Modern Technology Capabilities' and 'Employee Development and Governance'. The bank has also achieved 1st runner-up position in theme 'Digitally - enabled customer offerings'. Enhanced Access & Service Excellence (EASE) is an initiative by the DFS (GOI) as part of the PSB Reforms Agenda and is currently under

its fifth iteration which focuses on Enhanced Digital experience, Integrated and Inclusive Banking.

About Union Bank of India: Union Bank of India with 8729 Branches, is the fourth largest PSB after amalgamation in terms of business volumes. The total business of Union Bank of India has crossed 18 trillion for Sep,2022. Union Bank of India has been in the forefront in offering customised products with very competitive pricing. The Bank has also taken up lot of digital initiatives to empower its customers with ease of doing business with the Bank. In the recent EASE rankings released by DFS, Union Bank of India has improved upon its performance under various parameters, which the Bank attributes to its highly motivated workforce coupled with cutting-edge technology initiatives adopted.

# K. C. Mahindra Education Trust commits scholarship worth Rs 30,000 each for 41 students

**MOHALI:** The Mahindra All India Talent Scholarships (MAITS) scholarship was awarded to 41 students this year by the K. C. Mahindra Education Trust. Of the 150 applications received across Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, 65 students were shortlisted to attend the interviews held on 1st November 2022 at Swaraj Division,

in Mohali.

The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust (KCMET) was founded by the late Mr. K. C. Mahindra in the year 1953, with an objective to promote literacy and higher learning in the country. In addition to various other programmes the Trust established the Mahindra All India Talent Scholarship in 1995. This schol-

arship is awarded to students belonging to economically disadvantaged families, who wish to pursue a job-oriented Diploma course at a recognised Government Polytechnic in India. This Scholarship was established to encourage and support young students from rural and urban areas to pursue job-oriented Diplomas. The Trust awards

Rs. 10,000/- per annum to 550 students annually, for a maximum period of 3 years. Till date 11559 students have received the scholarship across India.

Arun Raghav, Sr GM (ER, Admin & CSR), Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd Swaraj Division, Roopali Jalota, General Manager, KCMET, Mumbai and Inderjeet Singh, Sr. Manager

Mahindra Finance, Chandigarh conducted the interviews of shortlisted candidates at Swaraj Division. Sheetal Mehta, Executive Director & Trustee, K.C. Mahindra Education Trust, said, "The Mahindra All India Talent Scholarship interviews give us an opportunity to directly interact with youth from extremely underprivileged backgrounds.

# Man held with heroin worth Rs 35 crore at Mumbai Airport

**MUMBAI:** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on Friday arrested a traveller with 4.98 kg of heroin worth Rs 35 crore at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, an official said.

The DRI had received information about a passenger trying to smuggle a drug consignment into the country, following which officials beefed up surveillance at the airport, the official said.

A man traveling from Nairobi (Kenya) to Mumbai was intercepted on suspicion when he crossed the green

channel, he said.

On searching his luggage, officials recovered 4.98 kg of off-white colour powder in a trolley bag and on testing, presence of heroin was found, the official said.

The contraband was kept in a black polythene bag concealed under a false cavity created in the trolley bag, due to which it was difficult to detect the drug, he said.

Further investigation in the case is underway to unearth and neutralise the international drug smuggling syndicate, the official said.

# upGrad to invest \$30 mn to launch 10 global campuses next year

Higher education platform upGrad on Monday announced to invest \$30 million and open 10 global campuses in the US, India and other regions next year.

Under a new brand name UGDGX, the company said it will open three campuses in the US (the San Francisco unit goes live in January), five in India (Delhi and Chennai) and one each in Singapore and Middle-East.

"As part of our goal to be the world's first and largest fully integrated higher edtech company spanning college learners and working professionals from the age of 18 to 60+ years, this is a natural extension as we move to a very scaled blended offline and online model under our own



upGrad brand," said Ronnie Screwvala, Co-founder and Chairperson, upGrad.

The company currently has facilities in Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru.

Under UGDGX, 'upGrad plans to have faculty recruitments in various geographies and will use technology to

seamlessly integrate campuses, faculty, and corporates within one ecosystem.

UGDGX will specialise in AI, machine learning, cybersecurity, Blockchain, connected devices, IoT, quantum computing, digital management, leadership courses and the Cloud, offering cer-

tificates, bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes in these areas.

UGDGX recently acquired data science, AI, ML-focused offline institute INSOFE.

"Rich engagements with industry connections will also enable our learners with real-world experiences from day one. All our programs have at least twice the number of capstones and project work compared to traditional programs," said Dr Dakshinamurthy Kolluru, Founder and CEO, upGrad INSOFE, who will also head the UGDGX.

upGrad has a learner base of over three million across more than 100 countries and over 300 university partners.

# IPL auction to be held on December 23 in Kochi

**NEW DELHI:** The players auction for the next year's Indian Premier League (IPL) will be held in Kochi on December 23, a BCCI official said on Wednesday.

The Turkish city of Istanbul, Bengaluru, New Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad were also in contention to host the auction but, the BCCI eventually opted for the coastal Kerala city.

"Logistically, and considering the dates, Kochi turned out to be the most suited option," a BCCI official told PTI.



Unlike the last auction, this year's will be a mini auction. The 10 IPL franchises have already been asked to submit their list of retained players by November 15. Also, the salary cap is likely to be increased from Rs 90 to Rs 95 crore for the IPL 2023 season.



# INTERNATIONAL

## Seizure of Stone Sculpture of Buddha datable to 2 nd / 3 rd CE at ICP, Attari

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

The Customs department here today informed that Customs officers posted at Land Customs Station at Attari under the Amritsar Customs Preventive Commissionerate have seized an antique stone sculpture of Buddha.

Commissioner Customs Amritsar, Rahul Nangare in a statement issued here today informed that a passenger of foreign nationality, who arrived in India via ICP, Attari was intercepted and his baggage was examined. During examination of his baggage, the Customs officers posted at the passenger terminal of ICP Attari, detected a stone sculpture of Buddha.

The sculpture was detained by Customs officers posted at the Passenger Terminal, ICP Attari on suspicion of being a prohibited item falling in the category of Antiquity. But at the same time a passenger who



was a Foreign National was freed to continue his journey to the next nation.

The matter was referred to the office of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Chandigarh circle. The ASI has now given a report confirming that the sculpture fragment appears to be Buddha of the Gandhara School of Art and tentatively datable to 2 nd or 3 rd CE and falls under the category of an-

tiquity under the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972. They have further informed that the main features of such idol pertaining to Gandhara School of Art are - with Flute hair, Face of Buddha shown as crown prince, the idols of Buddha are of are of Black soft stone, which comes from Syat ghati and the Gandhara Art is strongly influenced by Greeco- Roman Art, said he.

The stone sculpture has been seized under the Customs Act read with Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 and further investigation and necessary action under the relevant Acts is being taken in the matter. It was an incident of around twenty days back, but today a report with regard to Sculpture of Buddha was received from Archaeological Survey of In-

dia (ASI) Chandigarh, said a Custom official.

He said the seized Stone Sculpture of Buddha may be handed over to some museum or department of Archaeological Survey of India.

Adding further he said that in previous such instances of seizures of Antiquities, 262 Antiquity Coins were seized from a passenger at Land Customs Station, Attari Rail in May, 2017 and another 65 Antiquity Coins were seized from a passenger at Land Customs Station, Attari Rail in September, 2018.

The ASI had identified these coins as belonging to various historical eras including, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Period, Indo Greek coins of Azeluzus, square coin of Appollodotus, Coins of Akbar, Jahangir and Humayun and Coins of British era with legend Victoria Empress bust. Some of these Coins are now displayed in the Dharohar: National Museum of Customs & GST at Goa.

## Global Covid infection rates higher than previously reported

A joint study by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Unity Studies and SeroTracker and colleagues suggests that based on seroprevalence, global Covid-19 infection rates are likely to be higher than previously reported.

The study, published in the open access journal PLOS Medicine, found that global seroprevalence rose from 7.7 per cent in June 2020 to 59.2 per cent in September 2021, suggesting two-thirds of the global population may be SARS-CoV-2 seropositive from either vaccination or infection.

Estimates of Covid-19 infections based on seroprevalence data far exceed reported cases, suggesting a bigger global impact of Covid-19 than previously known. According to the authors, "this study on global seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies found that while seroprevalence has increased over time, a third of the global population tested negative for antibodies against the virus as of September 2021 estimates. It was also found that compared



to seroprevalence estimates, routine testing for Covid-19 has largely underestimated the number of global infections".

Serosurveillance provides estimates of antibody levels against infectious diseases and is considered the gold standard for measuring population immunity due to past infection or vaccination.

In order to ascertain the true rates of infection and indicators of immunity in the population against SARS-CoV-2 over time, researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of seroprevalence studies published from January 1, 2020 to May 20,

2022. From their search parameters, the authors identified 965 distinct seroprevalence studies sampling 5, 346, 069 participants between January 2020 and April 2022, with 43 per cent of these studies being from low-middle income countries.

"As we enter the third year of the pandemic, implementation of a global system or network for targeted, multi-pathogen, high-quality and standardised collaborative serosurveillance is a crucial next step to monitor the pandemic and contribute to preparedness for other emerging respiratory pathogens," said the researchers.

## PM to gift traditional Himachal items to world leaders at G20 summit



During the G20 summit in Bali scheduled to be held on November 15-16, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to gift unique art and handicraft items from Himachal Pradesh to world leaders, according to official sources.

The sources said that the Prime Minister may gift items like Kullu shawls and Kangra miniature paintings. India will take over the G20 presidency from Indonesia from December 1. India's tenure will continue till November 20, 2023. G20 is a premier forum for international economic co-operation representing around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade and around two-thirds of the world population.

India is taking over the presidency at a time when geo-political tensions are on the rise owing to the Russia-Ukraine war and inflation, rising fuel prices as well as unemployment are emerging as major global concerns apart from weakening of emerging markets and currencies, including the rupee.

Three working sessions will be held as part of the G20 summit agenda, namely on food and energy security, health and digital transformation.

## Winning ticket for \$2.04bn jackpot sold in California



A jackpot-winning Powerball ticket was sold in California for a record \$2.04 billion, authorities said. Lottery officials confirmed in a tweet on Tuesday that "California Lottery makes its FIRST EVER Billionaire", reports Xinhua news agency

"One lucky ticket sold at Joe's Service Center in Altadena matched all 6 numbers in the November 7 Powerball draw," said the tweet.

The jackpot climbed beyond its earlier estimate of \$1.9 billion to \$2.04 billion at the time of the drawing, making it the world's largest lottery prize, according to California Lottery officials.

## PM Modi to visit Indonesia to attend G20 summit



**NEWDELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Indonesia from November 14 to November 16 to attend the 17th G20 summit in Bali at the invitation of the Indonesian President Joko Widodo.

According to a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs, during the Bali summit, G20 leaders will deliberate extensively upon key issues of global concern under the summit theme of "Recover Together, Recover Stronger".

Three working sessions will be held as part of the G20 sum-

mit agenda, namely on food and energy security, health and digital transformation.

At the closing session of the summit, Widodo will symbolically hand over the G20 presidency to Modi. India will formally assume the G20 presidency from December 1, 2022, the statement added.

On the sidelines of the summit, the Prime Minister will hold bilateral meetings with some of his counterparts. Modi will also address and interact with the Indian community in Bali, official sources said.

## UK braces for strikes over pay disputes



A series of large-scale strikes across the UK over long-running pay disputes are set to disrupt daily life for the next few months and also expected to take a huge economic toll.

Strikes on the London Underground will go ahead on Thursday, after the government body Transport for London (TfL) and trade union representatives failed to reach an agreement, reports Xinhua news agency. The unions had asked TfL to pause job cuts and changes to pensions.

"Our members are resolute in their determination to see a just settlement to this jobs and

pensions dispute," said Mick Lynch, general secretary at The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers.

"They will continue their industrial campaign for as long as it takes." TfL has warned that there will be "limited or no services running" on Thursday, and passengers should avoid travelling on the Tube.

London Underground handles up to five million passengers a day, according to TfL. At peak times, there are over 540 trains running around the British capital. Meanwhile, starting on November 18 around 700 workers at

London's Heathrow airport will participate in a three-day strike. These workers are responsible for a wide variety of roles, including ground handling, airside transport and cargo, said Unite, one of the largest trade unions in the UK.

The strike will particularly affect Qatar Airways, which has scheduled an additional 10 flights a week during the World Cup that starts on November 20.

Passengers returning to the US for the Thanksgiving holiday are also set to be adversely affected, Unite said. Next, more than 70,000 university staff at 150 UK universities will strike for three days at the end of November over pay, working conditions and pensions.

The strike will be "the biggest ever to hit UK universities and could impact 2.5 million students", the University and College Union (UCU) said. UCU's demands include a meaningful pay rise to deal with the cost-of-living crisis, after employers granted a pay rise worth just 3 per cent this year. This followed over a decade of below-inflation pay rises, the union underlined.

## 2418 Indian Sikh pilgrims visit to Pakistan for Prakash Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev ji



JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

To celebrate Prakash Gurburb (birth anniversary) of Guru Nanak Dev at Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, different jathas (groups) sponsored by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) Haryana Gurdwara Management and Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee today crossed over to Pakistan here today.

The leadership of this jatha has been entrusted to former SGPC member Master Preet Singh.

Speaking on this occasion, jatha leader Master Preet Singh said that it is his good luck that he got the opportunity to lead jatha to Pakistan for Prakash Gurburb celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev.

SGPC member Bhai Manjit Singh said that although events were organised across the world to celebrate Prakash Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev, but being the part of birth celebration moments at his birthplace (Nankana Sahib) is great fortune for pilgrims. He said the governments should not have rejected pilgrimage visas, as this hurt the sentiments of pilgrims.

He said this year SGPC had sent passports of 1,496 pilgrims for issuing visas to Pakistan High Commission but appli-

cations of 586 pilgrims have been rejected, which has caused resentment in their minds. He said it is very important issue and governments of both countries should pay special attention to this issue.

However, the total strength of Sikh pilgrims who crossed over to Pakistan were 2418 that includes from Haryana and Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committees.

Meanwhile, SGPC secretary Partap Singh said that the jatha that departed to celebrate Prakash Gurburb at Gurdwara Nankana Sahib will also visit other historical Sikh shrines in Pakistan. He said that on November 7, the jatha of pilgrims will pay obeisance at Gurdwara Sacha Sauda, Mandi Chuharkhana (Sheikhupura) from Gurdwara Nankana Sahib. He said on November 8, the jatha will participate in the Prakash Gurburb celebrations at Gurdwara Nankana Sahib. On November 9, the pilgrims will depart for Gurdwara Panja Sahib at Hasan Abdal and after staying here on November 10, they will reach Gurdwara Dehra Sahib, Lahore on November 11. On November 13, jatha will visit Gurdwara Sri Rorhi Sahib, Eminabad, and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur Sahib, will return to Dehra Sahib, Lahore in the evening.

## Hottest October in northern Italy since 1800

Large swathes of northern Italy experienced the hottest October this year since record keeping began in 1800, the country's National Research Council said.

Temperatures reached 3.18 degrees Celsius above normal levels in the northern part of the country, Xinhua news agency quoted the Council as saying.

However, in Italy as a whole, temperatures were high but not record-breaking.

The Council said they were 2.08 degrees Celsius higher than normal, the second-highest increase compared to normal levels, just behind the record of 2.13 degrees Celsius reached in 2001.

The new data comes from Giulio Betti, a meteorologist and climatologist with the National Research Council.

In addition to the high tem-



peratures, much of the country has also suffered from a lack of rainfall, and an increase in extreme weather events including storms, floods, and strong winds.

The record high temperatures in October followed a long and unusually dry heatwave in Italy in the summer months, which resulted in hundreds of deaths and slashed agricultural production.

According to previous reports from the National Research Council, this year is on track to be the hottest ever recorded nationally.

## Indian national charged in \$8 mn Covid relief fraud scheme in US

An Indian national in the US faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison if convicted in an \$8 million Covid-19 relief fraud scheme, according to court documents.

Abhishek Krishnan, 40, has been charged by a federal grand jury in Newark, New Jersey, for fraudulently obtaining millions of dollars in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans guaranteed by the Small Business Administration (SBA) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Krishnan, who previously resided in Wake County, North Carolina, is charged with two counts of wire fraud, two counts of money



laundering, and two counts of aggravated identity theft.

After returning to India, Krishnan allegedly submitted numerous fraudulent PPP loan applications to federally insured banks, including on behalf of purported companies that were not registered business entities. The fraudulent PPP loan applications allegedly included false

statements about the companies employees and payroll expenses, as well as falsified tax filings. As part of the fraud scheme, Krishnan allegedly used the name of another person without that person's authority. He allegedly submitted at least 17 PPP loan applications seeking over \$8.2 million and received more than \$3.3 million in loan proceeds. Following receipt of the funds, Krishnan allegedly laundered the proceeds of the fraud. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison on each of the top counts and a mandatory minimum of two years in prison on each count of aggravated identity theft.

## Pak PM to appoint army Chief 'at any cost', Sharif brothers decide in London huddle

As crucial discussions among various stakeholders around the next Pakistan army chief's appointment gain momentum within and outside the country, the Sharif brothers have reportedly decided in a London huddle that the prime minister will not buckle under any 'pressure' to make the all-important appointment - come what may, media report said.

Meanwhile, it emerged on Thursday that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had been issued a diplomatic passport, paving the way for his impending return to the country, Dawn reported.

In the face of looming pressure from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan to appoint a new army chief that would be acceptable to him, and announce early polls, both Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his elder brother Nawaz Sharif have decided that the powers of the premier to appoint the army chief will not be surrendered



at any cost, a reliable source privy to the talks between the two brothers in London said, Dawn reported.

Insiders said that the prime minister had reportedly flown to London to place the options he was conveyed by certain quarters before his elder brother in the context of the fast-changing political scenario.

However, the source said both brothers agreed not to give in to Khan's demand for

Hassan and Hussain - were also present in the meetings.

A PML-N insider said the coalition government had "certain pressures" from some quarters over the issue of army chief's appointment and fresh polls. "That is why Shehbaz reached out to the party supreme to decide whether to accept some demands or not," he said.

The prime minister had rushed to London on Wednesday on his way back from Egypt to have the 'final word' from his elder brother and party's supreme leader, who has been in a self-imposed exile for three years, over the appointment of the new army chief. Sources said an extension to Gen Bajwa was also discussed during the meeting. Gen Bajwa's tenure is set to end on November 29, Dawn reported.

This was Shehbaz Sharif's third visit to the UK since taking over as premier in April this year.

## Top US Gen estimates 200K military casualties on both sides in Ukraine war



General Mark Milley, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, has estimated that around 100,000 Russian and 100,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed or injured since Moscow waged its ongoing war against Kiev on February 24.

Addressing an event in New York late Thursday, the most senior US general also said that around 40,000 civilians had died in the war, reports the BBC. These are the highest-ever estimates offered by a Western official. General Milley, who serves as US President Joe Biden's most senior military adviser, added that for any talks to be successful, both Russia and Ukraine would have to reach a "mutual recognition" that a wartime victory "is maybe not achievable through military means, and therefore you need to turn to other means".





## Actress Siddhika Sharma is getting a lot of appreciation for her role in the film Oye Makhna

**MUMBAI:** Siddhika Sharma has captured one and all since she began her acting debut. Siddhika has enthralled the limelight with her alluring personality. Hailing from Punjab, Siddhika Sharma has starred in some prodigious music videos and also worked with many well-known personalities. Apart from that the actress also made her debut with Fufadji alongside Jassi Gill. And now, Siddhika Sharma is all set to romance Ammy Virk in a fun-filled rom-com track that has rib-tickling punchlines and drama in Oye Makhna. The film is helmed by Simerjit Singh.

Siddhika took to her social media and shared the poster of her along with Amy Virk where the actress looks like a

perfect Desi kudi. On expressing her excitement about the film and playing one of the prominent roles she exclaimed, "What's the perfect recipe for an amazing movie? An exotic setting, catchy upbeat songs, a skilled team, and a stellar cast? This is exactly what this movie will deliver. I can promise all my fans that this movie is full of fun, laughter, and stirring emotions. A complete family film for the audience to enjoy."

On the work front, Siddhika Sharma was seen in 'Sau Sau Wari Khat Likhe' alongside Omkar Kapoor. She was also seen in a music video with Kaushal Tandon in Yaad Jab Aati Hai. Apart from that Siddhika Sharma did numerous songs like Manazoor Bewafaiyan, Chan Nalon Sohna



with Gippy Garewal, and many more. She will also be soon seen on screen in Bollywood which she will disclose soon. There are many more projects under the pipeline for this actor which will be announced soon.



## Anupam Kher has a fear of flying, reveals 'Uunchai' co-star Boman Irani

Bollywood actor Boman Irani revealed that his 'Uunchai' co-star Anupam Kher is scared of air travel and during the shoot, he had to comfort him by giving him a massage to make him feel easy and relaxed.

He said Kher has an extreme phobia of flying: "Anupam has a phobia, so when we used to sit in the helicopter, he would sit in the front, and I would be behind massaging him to give him comfort and keep asking him 'Are you okay'."

"But you can actually see his veins popping, and from there I could figure out what he had to face every day for the film ... hats off to him!"

Later, veteran actress Sarika also shared her working experience in the movie, saying

that they used to travel in a helicopter as if it was an auto rickshaw.

Sarika shared: "Helicopter was like an auto rickshaw for us. Every four days, we would change the altitude. And Sooraj (Barjatya) ji would send us to Kathmandu and back, so it felt like we were travelling in an auto."

Sarika is appearing on 'The Kapil Sharma Show' along with Anupam Kher, Boman Irani, and Neena Gupta to promote their film 'Uunchai'.

The 60-year-old actress also expressed her excitement about coming on the show and said: "I have been waiting for almost 10 years to be on the show and it feels so nice to be here."

## POTPOURRI



Sikh devotees light candles and lamps at the illuminated Harmandir Sahib, on the occasion of the 553rd Birth Anniversary (Gurpurab) of Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru and the founder of Sikhism, in Amritsar. PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILL

## Big B reveals he kept Karwa Chauth fast for Jaya



Megastar Amitabh Bachchan revealed that he used to observe Karwa Chauth for his wife, actress Jaya Bachchan in the initial years of their marriage, on 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 14'.

Ruchi, who is a media analyst from Gurugram, talked about the advantages of getting married to a childhood friend as he knows everything and one need not to pretend.

She also said that this year she kept her first Karwa Chauth after marriage and was shocked to know that her husband also kept the

fast for her. "This year was my first Karwa Chauth and in the morning when I prepared breakfast for my husband, he said he won't eat as he is also keeping fast for me."

Big B added to the conversation: "In the beginning I also used to keep fast, but later left it."

To this Ruchi replied: "Everyone says that in the initial years of marriage we used to do this and all but later left it. I am scared if the same happens with us!"

'KBC 14' airs on Sony Entertainment Television.

## Diljit Dosanjh is enjoying his solo trip in serenity of snow

Actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh, who is known for his work in films like, 'Udta Punjab', 'Good Newwz' and 'Jatt & Juliet' film series, is enjoying his solo trip in the thick cover of snow.

The 'Ek Kudi' hitmaker recently took to his Instagram to share a reel in which he can be seen preparing to go on a solo trip. Laced with fast cuts, the reel shows him making his own food, packing his bag, trotting off to an unknown location and enjoying his meal in the serenity of snow while dressed in winterwear.

He captioned his reel as, "My



Kinda day. Solo trip". However, his followers were left confused asking him who was recording the video if he is on a solo trip. The actor-singer then edited

his caption to, "Cameraman - Dosanjhwaala" implying that it's the era of tripods and one can pretty much shoot anything at infinite angles with a tripod.

## Rajkumar, Huma heap praise on 'Monica, O My Darling' OST

'Monica, O My Darling' actors Rajkumar Rao and Huma Qureshi opened up about the recently released music album of the film composed by Achint Thakkar along with Mikey McCleary and penned by Achint and Varun Grover.

Talking about the original soundtrack (OST), Huma said that Achint's music and lyrics compliment the story of the film, "Monica, O My Darling is a special film for me. The movie is a light-hearted comedy and each song in the album will hook



you to its tunes. Achint is super talented and has done a fantastic job with all the tracks."

Rajkumar is over the moon with the kind of response that his streaming film's trailer has garnered, "I am overwhelmed by

the response to the trailer. It is a gripping entertainer and also has tracks for all your moods, and I hope the audience will love the film and its catchy music."

Radhika, who plays the role of a cop in the film is in total consensus with her co-stars, Rajkumar and Huma, and appreciates Achint for doing justice to the story through his music, "The music of the film is one of my personal favourites and Achint has done a phenomenal job in bringing the edginess of the film to life with his tunes."

## Radhika Apte says she was 'quite nervous' on doing comedy in 'Monica O My Darling'

Actress Radhika Apte nailed it with her comic one-liners as a corrupt cop in the film 'Monica O My Darling'. However, it was not easy for her and was "quite nervous" as she was doing something like this.

Talking about crisp comedy coming naturally to her, Radhika in a conversation with media "This is the first time I have done something like this.



I was quite nervous about it but Vasana had confidence."

The actress has several exchanges with actor Rajkumar Rao, with whom she says was

"excited" to work with.

"I was very excited to work with Rajkumar and whatever we did was a product that I really enjoyed it. I love watching comedies. Hope I get to do more now." Funnily, Radhika has even mouthed a funny viral meme "Kya karun main itni sundar hun" in the film during a dialogue exchange with Rajkumar.

## Rashmika Mandana opens up about receiving negativity and hatred

Actress Rashmika Mandana has been witnessing a steady upward graph in her career but with great adulation also comes a lot of negativity and trolling. The actress recently opened up about being at the receiving end of hatred and trolling, in her recent social media post.

Taking to her Instagram, the 'Pushpa: The Rise' actress shared a picture of herself wearing a face



mask while she sits in a boat surrounded by serene waters. She shared a long note in the

caption opening up about her state of mind and how does negativity affect her. She started off her note by writing, "Hi so. A couple of things have been troubling me these last few days or weeks or months or maybe even years now, and I think it's time I address it. I am only speaking for myself - something I should have done years ago. I have been on the receiving end of a lot of hate ever since I started my

career. Quite literally a punching bag for a lot of trolls and negativity out there (sic)".

She further mentioned that she is aware of that an actor's life comes with a lot of appreciation and unwarranted hatred, "I know that the life I've chosen comes with a price- I understand that I'm not everyone's cup of tea and certainly don't expect to be loved by every single person out there.

I thought this story must be told so that every Indian can feel proud of their country. This will be India's first pure science film about a bio-war we had no idea about".

## Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri is making India's first film on bio-war, 'The Vaccine War'



Director Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri, whose 'The Kashmir Files' emerged as a surprise hit this year, is ready with yet another film. This time, the subject of the film is indigenous Covid vaccine and the challenges that it faced. Vivek revealed the title of the film, 'The Vaccine War' on Thursday on his social media.

Talking about how the film was conceived, he said, "When 'The Kashmir Files' was postponed during COVID lockdown, I started researching on it. Then we started researching with the scientists of ICMR & NIV who made our own vaccine possible. Their story of struggle and sacrifice was overwhelming and while researching we understood how these scientists fought a war waged against India not just by foreign agencies but even our own people (sic)".

The film in his opinion is India's first science film about a bio-war, "Yet, we won against superpowers by making the fastest, cheapest and safest vaccine. I thought this story must be told so that every Indian can feel proud of their country. This will be India's first pure science film about a bio-war we had no idea about".

The film, which is set to go on floors this month, has apparently booked August 15, 2023 for the film's global release. It will be released in 10 plus languages including Hindi, English, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Bhojpuri, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, and Bengali.

## Siddharth Anand: 'Pathaan' will showcase Deepika Padukone in probably her hottest self



'Pathaan' director Siddharth Anand says the film will present Deepika Padukone at her hottest and coolest best and that she will mesmerise everyone with her sizzling screen presence like never before.

Siddharth says, "Deepika Padukone is up there with the biggest of superstars in the history of Hindi cinema. And we knew we had written a role for her in 'Pathaan' that is not only breathtaking, but one that also justifies her superstardom. 'Pathaan' will showcase her in probably her hottest and at the same time, the coolest self."

SRK and Deepika are one of the biggest on-screen pairings in the history of Indian cinema given their epic blockbusters like 'Om Shanti Om', 'Chennai Express' and 'Happy New Year'.

SRK and Deepika recently sizzled in Spain as leaked photos from the sets. The glamorous duo shot a song in Mallorca as SRK was papped flaunting an eight-pack and Deepika her perfect bikini bod. They then headed to Cadiz and Jerez in Spain where they wrapped the schedule.

About the super-hot pairing, Siddharth says, "The on-screen jodi of Deepika and Shah Rukh Khan is probably one of the biggest pairings that Indian cinema has ever seen, given their incredible successes in the past. And in Pathaan we have presented SRK and DP in a way that's unprecedented." He adds, "They have electric chemistry with each other and they look just so hot together. It's rare to find a pairing like theirs and their jodi is a huge USP for Pathaan."

## Indian women's team announced for FIH Women's Nations Cup 2022

ARUNKUMAR RAO Bengaluru

Hockey India on Wednesday named the 20-member Indian Women's Hockey Team for the forthcoming FIH Women's Nations Cup being held for the first time in 2022.

The FIH Women's Nations Cup is an important fixture in the international calendar as it brings in a system of promotion-relegation, where the champions will be promoted to the FIH Hockey Women's Pro League's 2023-2024 seasons.

India is grouped in pool B along with Canada, Japan and South Africa. The other teams in the fray are Ireland, Italy, Korea and Spain who are grouped in pool A.

Savita has been named the Captain for the tournament along with Deep Grace Ekka as the Vice Captain.

Young forward Beauty Dungdung is all set to make her international debut at the FIH Nations Cup while experienced midfielder Navjot Kaur returns to the squad after she missed out the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 after testing positive for Covid 19.

The team includes Bichu Devi Kharibam in the squad along



with Savita as goalkeepers while Deep Grace will be joined by Gurjit Kaur, Nikki Pradhan, Udita and Ishika Chaudhary as defenders.

The midfield will feature Nisha, Salima Tete, Sushila Chanu Kharibam, Monika, Neha, Sonika, Jyoti and Navjot Kaur while forwardline includes the experienced Vandana Katarinya, Lalremisiami, Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari and Beauty Dungdung.

The Indian women's team, who recently won the Bronze medal at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022, made their debut in the 2021-22 FIH Pro League.

India put up an impressive campaign in their maiden appearance finishing behind Argentina and the Netherlands. The team will be looking to win the FIH Women's Nations Cup to make their second FIH Pro League appearance in 2023-

2024. Speaking about the team, Indian Women's Hockey Chief Coach Janneke Schopman said, "I'm very happy with the performance of the entire playing group in this camp. Our level is getting higher and the group is very competitive. It was difficult to pick 20 players but I believe this group will have a good chance to perform well and show what we have been working on."

Indian Women's Team: GOALKEEPERS: Savita (Captain), Bichu Devi Kharibam DEFENDERS: Deep Grace Ekka (Vice Captain), Gurjit Kaur, Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary MIDFIELDERS: Nisha, Salima Tete, Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, Monika, Neha, Sonika, Jyoti, Navjot Kaur FORWARDS: Vandana Katarinya, Lalremisiami, Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari, Beauty Dungdung.

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