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FROM WHERE RAHUL GANDHI LEARNING HINDU PHILOSOPHY, WHO IS TEACHING IF HE IS AN INDIA OR A FOREIGNER: ANIL VIJ

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

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PUNJAB'S VERKA WILL OPEN 625 NEW BOOTHS IN STATE: VIJAY KUMAR JANJUA

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HARRDY SANDHU'S 'KYA BAAT AY' GETS A FLIRTATIOUS TOUCH IN 'KYAA BAAT HAI 2.0'

Mann announces to further strengthen single window system for facilitating investors

NEW DELHI: Reiterating the commitment of his government to transform the state into a major industrial and export hub by facilitating businesses and creating an investor-friendly environment, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday said that the state government is further strengthening the single window system for facilitating the investors.

Interacting with the delegates during fifth meeting of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Northern Region Council here today, the Chief Minister said that earlier single window service was merely a sham, devoid of any meaningful purpose, which not only demoralized the potential investors but also hampered the industrial development of the state.

However, he said that his government is making all out efforts to ensure that investors get all the facilities at this window smoothly and without any sort of corrupt practices. Bhagwant Mann invited the captains of industry to invest in the state and become a part of industrial evolution and



progress. The Chief Minister lauded the efforts undertaken by the CII in supporting industry and creating a business conducive environment.

He said that the Punjab Government is undertaking myriad efforts to foster an investment ecosystem in the state, create suitable employment opportunities for all, provide access to quality infrastructure, enable greater transparency and accountability in governance. Bhagwant Mann said that Punjab is ranked third in Ease of Logistics in the country as the State has a strong logistics backbone

and overlapping regulations. Bhagwant Mann said that the state currently houses more than 1,000 skill development centres adding that Punjab Skill Development Mission (PSDM) has more than 250 empanelled training partners thereby creating an accessible network of training facilities to create a pool of trained manpower.

The Chief Minister said that Start Up Punjab promotes entrepreneurship by creating an investor-friendly environment conducive to Start-ups and a dedicated Innovation Mission Punjab has been set up to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in the state.

He further said that the Government of Punjab will soon launch its new Industrial Development Policy in next few months which will lay down the roadmap for industrial policy of Punjab for next five years.

Bhagwant Mann said that the state government has received valuable suggestions from all stakeholders and efforts are being made to incorporate them into the New Industrial Policy 2022.

with five Inland Container Depots (ICDs). Rolling out Red Carpet to the captains of Industry, the Chief Minister said that state offers one of the most competitive rates of power for all industries and is recognized as one of the top achievers in significantly improving its ease of doing business, in the latest Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) report of the Government of India.

He further said that Punjab has undertaken simplification and digitization of processes for compliances, decriminalization of minor offences and elimination of redundant laws

Punjab ready for hosting G 20 summit in state : CM Mann

NEWDELHI: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday assured the Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the state government will set a new benchmark by successfully hosting the two sessions of G 20 summit in the state.

Chief Minister, while participating in videoconferencing chaired by the Prime Minister to review the arrangements, said that State was fortunate to have got two sessions of G-20, first in March 15, 16 and 17 on Education and then in month of June 22-23 on Labour. He said that the state is renowned all over the world for its warm



hospitality and no stone will be left unturned for welcoming the guests from participating nations during these events. Bhagwant Mann said that these sessions will be held at the sacred land of Amritsar where lakhs of devotees daily pay obeisance at Sri Darbar Sahib, Durgiana Mandir, Jallianwala Bagh and others.

Punjab Chief Minister assured Narendra Modi that the state government will make elaborate arrangements for comfortable stay of the dignitaries participating in the summit. He said that apart from assuring their cozy stay in state, the guests will be offered the traditional Punjabi food adding that they will also be given glimpse of rich Punjabi culture during the cultural events in the evening. Bhagwant Mann said that if the dignitaries will wish to visit other districts of state like sports hub Jalandhar then adequate arrangements will also be made for their journey.

Chief Minister informed Narendra Modi that the state government has already constituted several committees for smooth conduct of the event. Likewise, he said that a Cabinet Sub Committee is also monitoring the preparations on routine basis. Bhagwant Mann said that even the officers will also visit the other states where the events are being organised prior to Punjab, to take stock of the arrangements.

Punjab Chief Minister said that the state is all set to hold this mega event which will further put the state of roadmap of international tourism.

CM calls on Piyush Goyal, seeks immediate release of pending payment of RDF, MDF worth Rs 3095 cr

NEWDELHI: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday sought the kind intervention of Union Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles Minister Piyush Goyal for immediate release of pending arrears of Rural Development Fee (RDF) and Market Development Fee (MDF) worth Rs 3095 crore.

The Chief Minister, who called on Piyush Goyal here at his office, said that the Union government has not yet released RDF worth Rs 2880



crore for KMS 2021-22, RMS 2022-23 and KMS 2022-23 and MDF worth Rs 215 crore. He said that these funds are utilised for the holistic development of the state especially in the rural areas. However,

Bhagwant Mann bemoaned that due to non release of these funds the development of state, especially in rural areas, has been adversely affected.

The Chief Minister said that RDF is payable to Punjab Rural Development Board of Government of Punjab as per section 7 of Punjab Rural Development Act 1987, @3% of MSP. He said that RDF has been paid on regular basis since 1987 till RMS 2020-21 as per rate notified (3% of MSP) by Government of Punjab till RMS 2020-21. Bhagwant Mann said

that the purpose of this fund is basically to promote the agriculture and rural infrastructure which ultimately add to overall development of agriculture viz rural road network, marketing infrastructure, augmentation of storage facility, land record computerization, automation, mechanization of mandis and others. The Chief Minister bemoaned that RDF was restricted to 1% of MSP in the Provisional Cost sheet of KMS 2020-21 onwards, on the plea of its scrutiny with respect to purpose of funds.

RBI hikes repo rate by 35 bps



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Wednesday increased the repo rate by 35 basis points (bps) to 6.25 per cent to contain inflation. The repo rate, also called the policy rate, is the interest at which RBI lends money to the commercial banks. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, heading the MPC, announced the rate hike.

National Conference calls for early polls in J&K, return of Article 370



FW DESK
National Conference on Monday called for the restoration of Article 370 and 35A and statehood to the Union territory. The party also made a strong pitch for holding Assembly elections.

The demands were made in a resolution passed at a delegate meeting to elect the party president. The meeting was held at the mausoleum of National Conference founder Shiekh Mohammad Abdullah on his 117th birthday.

"It was promised by the country's Home Minister that the much-awaited assembly elections will be held after the delimitation process is over. Now that the process is complete and the final updated voter list is out, still there is no announcement for assembly elections," the resolution reads. "Considering the political situation in J&K, this delegate session resolves that Articles 370, 35-A be restored to their original, undiluted form," the resolution further says. "It also demanded that the Centre should restore full statehood to J and K and announce the assembly election dates at the earliest." It urged the people of India to rise to the occasion and ask the BJP-led central government to remove injustices in Jammu and Kashmir.

Government of India should mark martyrdom day of Sahibzadas as 'SahibzadeShahadatDiwas', says Harjinder Singh Dhami



The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami has written to Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and demanded that the martyrdom day of Sahibzadas should be marked as 'SahibzadeShahadatDiwas' instead of 'Veer BalDiwas' as announced by the government.

Dhmi said that in the notification issued by the Home Department, Government of India (GOI) this year, it has been notified to mark the martyrdom day of Sahibzadas as Veer BalDiwas, while this name is not as per the spirit of Sikh history and principles. He said that after this announcement of GOI, a committee of Sikh scholars was formed by Sri Akal Takht Sahib, which has recommended the name 'SahibzadeShahadatDiwas' instead of Veer BalDiwas.



He said that the executive of SGPC had also passed a resolution in this regard in October, after which an appeal was made to the government to change the name. Dhmi said that the martyrdom day of Sahibzadas is coming this month, which should be marked in the spirit of Sikh history.

"In view of the spirit of Sikh history and principles, the GOI's notification should be amended and the martyrdom day of Sahibzadas should be notified as 'SahibzadeShahadatDiwas' instead of Veer

BalDiwas", he said. Meanwhile, the SGPC President also asked Iqbal Singh Lalpura, Chairperson of National Commission for Minorities to fulfill his responsibility on this serious issue. He said that Lalpura should stop making accusations and raise the issues of minorities with the government as per the conduct of his constitutional post.

Harjinder Singh Dhmi said that Iqbal Singh Lalpura's post on social media is wrong that no educational institutions have been opened in the last 318 years in the memory of

Sahibzadas. He said that a person sitting on a constitutional post representing minorities should not make statements without facts.

He said that Sahibzadas of Sri Guru Gobind Singh and Mata Gujri Ji are the heroes of Sikh history, who sacrificed to stop Mughal tyranny against humanity and religious freedom. He said many educational institutions are being run by the SGPC as a mark of respect in the name of these great martyrs.

At Sri Fatehgarh Sahib, there is a trust in the name of Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh since the time of Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, under which three educational institutions are running in the name of Sahibzadas. Mata Gujri College, a 65-year-old autonomous educational institution at Sri Fatehgarh Sahib, is one of top colleges in the entire state, in which about 70 different courses are running. Similarly, Sahibzada Ajit Singh Public School Mahilpur Hoshiarpur; Parivar Vichhora Public School, Sarsa Nangal, Ropar; Sahibzada Baba Fateh Singh Public School, Guru Ka Bagh, Amritsar; Sahibzada Zorawar Singh Public School, Nadala, Kapurthala; Sahibzada Jujhar Singh Public School, Kot Dharmu, Mansa; Sahibzada Ajit Singh Public School, Bajidpur Ferozepur; Mata Gujri Khalsa College, Kartarpur, Jalandhar; and Mata Gujri Public School, Tehri Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, are established in memory of Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri Ji.

SGPC president said the SGPC organises special events in all its educational institutions every year on the occasion of the martyrdom week in memory of the Sahibzadas, for which an official circular is issued. Apart from this, many institutions have been established by other organisations in the name of Sahibzadas. SGPC President said that while holding a responsible position, Lalpura should not make such fabricated statements, which tarnish the image of Sikhs.

Cong demands white paper on demonetisation in LS

NEW DELHI: Leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Friday sought a white paper on demonetisation, while calling it a 'failed' decision on part of the central government.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Chowdhury said that the government had taken the decision without thinking and the very basis of the decision was illogical. He said that there was a 72 per cent increase in the circulation of currency notes, adding that black money had not stopped and its circulation continued. BJP MP Nishikant Dubey intervened him by saying that the Congress was supporting terrorism and illegal migrants from Bangladesh, that is why it was opposed to the note ban.



After journalists, Kashmiri Pandits receive threat from terror outfit

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After the threats against journalists, it is Kashmiri Pandits who are now receiving threats. The Resistance Front (TRF), said to be a shadow organisation of the proscribed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET), have threatened the Valleys Hindus to leave the region. The TRF has released a list of Kashmiri Hindus saying that non-locals and Kashmiri Hindus were taking away jobs and land in Kashmir. In fact, the list of Kashmiri Hindus TRF plans to target is the same one that the government had decided to employ under a prime minister's scheme. This has been a source of concern for security agencies. The disclosure of names is being seen as a big breach of security as questions are being raised as to how TRF got access to this confidential document.

Election Commission's CVIGIL App gets over 6K complaints in Gujarat

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission's CVIGIL App has emerged as a force multiplier and a powerful tool to promptly report unlawful campaigning activities and violation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC), officials said.

A total of over 1,000 cases were reported from Himachal Pradesh in which over 800 cases were found correct and action was taken. Over 580 cases reported were for posters and banners without permission and 185 cases were for money distribution. In Gujarat, a total of over 6,000 cases were reported in which over 5,100 cases were found to be correct. A total of over 3,600 violations were related to putting up posters and banners without permissions.

CVIGIL is a Single App for recording, reporting, and resolving violations. Citizens, candidates and political parties can complain anonymously and it takes GIS location automatically. Officials said that response comes in a 100-minute timeline by EC teams.



Apart from this, EC took strict action on SSP Mainpuri and Etawah for non-compliance of its instructions on transfer and posting of officials in bye elections to Mainpuri Parliamentary Constituency of Uttar Pradesh. It directed SSP Mainpuri to relieve 6 police officers.

The Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh was directed to ensure that force deployment related to by-election for 21-Mainpuri Parliamentary Constituency is done strictly under the supervision of the concerned General and Police Observer, following the laid down procedure of randomisation etc. Randomisation of local police force is a cornerstone of extant instruction of the Commission to ensure fairness, said the officials.

AAP seeks blessing of PM Modi to improve civic amenities, after MCD election victory

YOGESH KANT
New Delhi

"Love you, too", said the CM Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday while thanking the people for the AAP's Victory in the civic elections and sought the co-operation of the BJP and the congress as well as the blessing of the centre and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to improve civic amenities in the national capital. He also cautioned the party worker and newly elected councillor to not be egoistic, saying ego ruins everything.

The Aam Aadmi Party won the MCD polls with 134 seats, ending the 15-year rule of the BJP in the prestigious municipal corporation and reducing the Congress to just nine seats in a house of 250. The BJP, which was predicted to suffer a massive defeat in exit polls, put up a spirited fight, winning 104 municipal wards.

"We all have to improve the condition of Delhi and I need cooperation from all, including the BJP and Congress, espe-



cially the help and blessings of the Centre and the prime minister to do so," Kejriwal said in his victory speech at AAP headquarters on DDU Marg. "We need the central government's help. We need the PM and Centre's aashirvad (blessing)," Kejriwal said. The big message from these polls was that people want constructive politics, not negativity, he said.

"I appeal to all parties and candidates - we have indulged in politics till this point. Now we have to work together. We

want the cooperation of BJP and Congress. Together, we will fix Delhi," said the Chief Minister "We worked day and night to fix schools, we worked day and night to fix hospitals, today they have given us the responsibility of cleaning up Delhi, ending corruption... There are many responsibilities," Kejriwal said.

We don't believe in negative politics and don't do the politics of abusing one another. We have asked the vote in the name of good governance, better education system and

healthcare and for an honest government, and the people have blessed us with their support," Kejriwal said.

He also advised the winners from the AAP to refrain from being vain. "Bigger governments have fallen due to vanity. So, do not give in to this vice," he said. Minutes after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) crossed the halfway mark, Kejriwal's deputy Manish Sisodia tweeted that "this is not just a win but a big responsibility".

Thanking the residents of the national capital, Delhi's

Deputy Chief Minister Sisodia tweeted in Hindi, "We thank the people of Delhi for trusting the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi MCD (polls). People have defeated the world's biggest and most negative party and ensured the win of honest Arvind Kejriwal." For us, this is not just a win, but a big responsibility," Sisodia added.

AAP's victory gives it a "double engine" government for the first time in the capital, where it has been in power since 2015. The party has accused the BJP of obstructing it at every turn, using its government at the Centre, the Lieutenant Governor, and the civic body. The AAP won 132 seats in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi polls while the BJP was runner up with wins in 104 wards. The AAP's victory ended BJP's 15-year rule at the civic body. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia were also present at the victory celebration of the party

From where Rahul Gandhi learning Hindu philosophy, who is teaching if he is an India or a foreigner: Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

Haryana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij while hitting back at Congress MP Rahul Gandhi said that Shri Ram resides in the heart and every vein of the people; even if the whole Congress party joins, they cannot remove Ram from the minds of the people. He was responding to a question asked by media persons at his camp office Ambala regarding Rahul Gandhi's statement that BJP people do not speak Jai Siyaram. Raising the question, Anil Vij raising a question said that from where Rahul Gandhi is learning Hindu philosophy and who is teaching him, whether he is an Indian or a



foreigner, it is also important to know.

He said that people also say Jai Shri Ram and Jai Siyaram, they have been doing this for ages, now they are shocked by the name of Ram, because they first said that Ram is imaginary, then when it came to Ramsetu, they said that it does not exist, then NASA showed it, then kept silent. The Home

Minister said that Congress tried at every step somehow remove Ram ji from the minds of the people, but Ram resides in the heart and in every vein of the people; they cannot remove Ram from people's mind.

In response to a question asked by former Congress MP Yadurupa about comparing the Prime Minister with Bhasmasur, Vij said now using such

words to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi!!!!. He said that Chanakya has said one thing that when a man is defeated, he starts seeing defeat in front of his eyes, then he gets furious and speaks opposite words, the situation of Congress is also the same as on today.

In response to a question regarding the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, Vij said that «exactly we are conducting a study on it, and are also taking it from the states which have implemented it, where it is planned to be implemented, taking from it also». Vij said that we are carrying out the study on it and will decide only after completing the study.

Goldi Brar most wanted by police in 5 states including 2 cases at Ambala

SATISH HANDA

28 years old gangster Goldi Brar having over two dozen cases of murder, attempt to murder, threatening for ransom demand and mastermind in alleged murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala has been arrested at California in USA since Red Corner notice was raised against him by the government and the concerned authorities in USA informed Indian agencies about his arrest. Ministry of Home, Government of India is trying to bring him in the country to investigate large number of cases registered against the hard core criminal. Goldi Brar is wanted by police in more than 17 criminal cases registered against him in different police stations in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi states.

Goldi Brar was also wanted in two cases registered against



him at Ambala including double murder of youths Mohit Rana and Vishal while travelling in a car showering bullets on them opposite a school on Jagadhari Road Ambala Cantt few months ago and in another case allegedly demanded Rs 1 crore ransom amount from a property dealer threatening to kill him. Faridabad police will also bring Goldi Brar on production warrant in a case registered against him at Sarai Khawaja police station



allegedly demanding Rs 1 crore ransom amount from a businessman. Recently, a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi group identifying himself as a sharp shooter of Lawren Bishnoi gang sent a Watts up message from France twice in a day demanding Rs 50 lakh ransom amount from a contractor Rajiv Dahiya a resident of village Adiana in Panipat district threatening to kill him as well as his wife working as a teacher in a reputed school

in case ransom amount will not be paid him.

Goldi Brar son of Shamsher Singh resident of Mukatsar in Punjab working as ASI in Punjab police was forcibly retired from the service when Goldi Brar also went to Canada on study Visa in 2016 and entered into criminal world in October 2020 when his cousin brother a student leader Gurlal Brar was shot dead in a student gang war and to take revenge Goldi Brar shot dead a youth congress president and after this incident he never looked back and was involved in large number of criminal cases one after the other along with other gangster groups including murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala along with gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. Information reveals that Goldi Brar was arrested on the information of gangster Lakhbir Singh Landa operating his criminal network from Canada.

Gian Jyoti Institute of Management and Technology organized Fresher's Party



FW DESK

“AAGAMAN-2022” on 07th December, 2022. The party began with a fashion show/ramp walk performed by the freshers. Music, dance, songs and different stage shows were the source of excitement among students. Professional band entertained the students and created the ambience. It became a lively platform for students to enjoy unconditionally.

Honourable Chief Guest, The Chairman of GJMIT - J.S. Bedi, Respected Director - Dr. Aneet Bedi and faculty members of the Institute were present to bless all the students and welcomed the freshers. The Chairman addressed the students and assured them about best quality education along with campus placements. He also motivated the budding professionals to learn better to serve the society in more effective manner.

Four of a family from Punjab drowned in canal near Ambala under mysterious circumstances



SATISH HANDA
Ambala

The bodies of four members of a family residing at village Tiwana near Lalru travelling in a Maruti Suzuki 800 car drowned in Narwana branch canal near village Ismailpur in Ambala district was brought out by divers under mysterious circumstances. Naggal police station team reached at the spot on getting information and samples of the viscera of deceased have been sent for testing to confirm if it was an incidental case or those died had consumed poison since foam was oozing from the mouth of female child and blood was seen coming out from the mouth of father driving the car. According to an eye witness, the couple was seen having hot discussion for about 15 minutes before car fell down in the river deep in water, later divers arrived

at the spot brought out the bodies of four members of the family. Police officials said that prima facie the cause of death seemed to be drowning. However, the viscera report will reveal truth.

The victims were identified as Kulbir Singh (40), his wife Kamaljit (38), their daughter Jashanpreet (16) and son Khushpreet (11). SHO Naggal police station Anant Ram said, inquest proceedings have been initiated under Section 174 of IPC and autopsies were carried out in the presence of their relatives at the civil hospital Ambala and their viscera samples have been sent for further investigation to forensic laboratory. The family of four had gone missing on Sunday, after which Sucha Singh father of Kulbir Singh a 40-year-old dairy farmer left in the ill-fated car had registered a missing persons' report at the Lalru police station.

Joint venture manufacturing cluster in 3000 hectare area at Hisar

SATISH HANDA

While interacting with media persons Deputy Chief Minister Haryana Dushyant Chautala also holding the charge of state industrial development told that an MoU between Haryana state government and Union government has been signed to develop a manufacturing cluster jointly in 3000 hectare area at Hisar which would be a textile hub in the state according to new textile policy constituted by the state and a meeting in this regard was held on December 5, 2022.

Chautala said that large number of industrial developmental proposals to develop Hisar as an integrated manufacturing cluster jointly by the state gov-



ernment and government in centre are under process likely to be finalized in IMC meeting being held at New Delhi shortly between the experts of both governments when this joint venture between the both will be given final shape. In reply to a media question as

regard construction of domestic airport at Hisar, Chautala said that work for the construction of runway at this airport is going on war footing basis likely to be completed by March 2023. He told that a trial for landing of an 18 seat aircraft on the runway has been scheduled at this airport on December 12, 2022 by the officers of aviation department from New Delhi.

Two arrested with 3.10 kg opium in Ambala

SATISH HANDA
Ambala

The CIA-1 of Ambala police arrested two men and during search recovered from them 3.10 kg opium along with Rs 80,000 money. They were identified as Amlesh Sahni and Ashok Sahni, both hailing from Bihar.

Pooja Dabla IPS ASP Ambala while talking to media persons said that the duo was nabbed with the contraband after a raid on Thursday and a case was registered at



Sadar police station Ambala City under section 18 of NDPS Act.

Information revealed that Ashok living in a rented accommodation at Ambala whereas Amlesh used to bring drugs from Bihar and

both were selling drugs locally as well as in surrounding area. Both will be produced in the court on Saturday for police remand when police will find out details about the supply of opium from where they were getting drugs as well as to whom they were supplying, Dabla told the media.

During preliminary investigation arrested accused told that they were supplying drugs in the area since past five to six months and now thinking to leave this profession.

Punjab police station hit by rocket launcher

CHANDIGARH: In an apparent 'terror' attack, a police station in Punjab's Tarn Taran district was hit by a probable rocket-propelled grenade (RPG), officials said on Saturday.

However, there was no casualty. At the time of the attack on Friday night, eight persons, including Station Head Official (SHO) Parkash Singh, were present at the police station.

The windowpanes of the police station were damaged, besides its main entrance.

Senior police officials have reached the spot for investigation. This was the second RPG



attack on a police station in the state in seven months. Earlier, there was an RPG attack on Punjab Police's Intelligence Wing headquarters in Mohali.

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Punjab Mandi Board bags 8th digital transformation conclave award



CHANDIGARH: In recognition to one of the most Innovative Citizen Engagement for the benefit of farmers through Technology in form of "Digitization of J-Form via Whatsapp and Digi-Locker", Punjab Mandi Board has bagged the 8th Digital Transformation award.

The award was bestowed to the officers of the Punjab Mandi Board by the IT Minister of Assam in a function held at Guwahati on Friday. The award was given through jury-led process at Assam under the supervision of senior Bureaucrats and experts from Department of IT Assam. During the event, the Jury lauded the bold and innovative communicators introduced by Punjab Mandi Board for setting new standards for digital communications.

Divulging more details, Secretary Mandi Board Mr. Ravi Bhagat said that Punjab is known for setting up of e-Governance in almost all the departments of state gov-

ernment adding that Punjab Mandi Board has started this unique initiative by setting up E-Procurement (procurement by invitation) during COVID-19 in 2020. He said that since then, the IT team of board has launched several e-services like online license, online payments, digitization of J-Form, online procurement, VTS app for recording of outside state crop coming to Punjab, e-Auction portal, e-Daak portal and others to facilitate the stakeholders. Mr. Bhagat emphasized that these digital initiatives have not only saved manpower and logistics cost but has also helped in ensuring transparency and efficiency in operations, facilitation of stakeholders via e-license, e-pass, payments via dedicated gateways and others.

Likewise, the Secretary Mandi Board said that it has also helped to reduce licensing registration timeframe from 1.5 months to 1 week. He further said that Punjab Mandi Board has focused on unique

Integrated Management System (IMS) through which users access the single version of truth. Mr. Bhagat said that it is a matter of pride and satisfaction that Punjab Mandi Board, has bagged "Most Innovative Citizen Engagement through Technology" category award.

Secretary Mandi Board further said that farmers of the state are getting immensely benefitted from the idea of digitizing the J-Form via Whatsapp, and in Digi-Locker. He said that this digital receipt gives freedom to citizens for utilizing this receipt as an income proof to avail benefits under various government schemes. Mr. Bhagat said that this digital receipt of J-Form not only serves the farmers but also the government by removing duplicate holders in various government subsidies adding that this unique farmer data has not only helped the Punjab Mandi Board but also various other government departments for delivering subsidies to citizens.

SAD Badal expels Jagmeet Brar from primary membership of the party

CHANDIGARH: Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) expelled former MP Jagmeet Brar from the primary membership of the party for indulging in anti-party activities.

This decision was announced by the party's Disciplinary Committee Chairman Sikandar Singh Maluka after a meeting of the Committee. Jagmeet Brar, who had been invited to give his explanation in person to the Committee, did not do so.

Explaining the decision, Sikandar Maluka said the party had given Mr Brar ample opportunities to explain his actions. "First a show cause notice was issued to him. When the reply in this regard was found unsatisfactory the leader was asked to explain his view in person". Maluka said Brar had requested him to postpone the date for his personal appearance before the Committee on December 6 stating he had to attend the bhog ceremony of a party worker. "However he chose to attend a public meeting organized by expelled leader Bibi Jagir Kaur on that date".

The disciplinary committee Chairman said it was clear that Brar was hatching conspiracies against the SAD even as he publicly professed that he was trying to strengthen it. He said if the expelled leader was sincere towards strengthening the



party he would have stayed within party discipline and worked as per the guidelines given by the party President. "Instead of doing this he is announcing his own committees which cannot be tolerated".

Maluka also highlighted how the party had given due honour to the rebel leader by inducted him into the party's core committee, appointing him as senior vice president and even allocating him a party ticket. "But despite getting such honour he acted as per his old traits".

Disciplinary Committee member Virsa Singh Valtaha while speaking on the occasion said Brar had indulged in double speak all along. "His actions have always been further from strengthening the party. In fact he made his own Committee to foment trouble but he did not get any response with leaders nominated to the committee distancing themselves from him". He said this was the reason the rebel leader had not been able to hold a meeting of the so-called Committee till now.

Tensions continue to mount along the Maharashtra-Karnataka border

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Amid the raging border controversy buses and lorries coming under attack in sporadic incidents in both Karnataka and Maharashtra, the path of dialogue took centre stage with Maharashtra BJP leader and deputy CM Devendra Fadnis calling up Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai and discuss in what appears to be coordinated effort by BJP central leadership to douse the fire.

Karnataka CM Bommai said his state did not intend to create a new controversy. "I said there will be reactions



on both sides and therefore, we must not disturb the cordial relationship between the two states," he said. "The SC seized of the matter and we

are confident of winning this legal battle. Our government is committed to protecting our border and our people, and taking care of Kannadigas liv-

ing in Maharashtra, Telangana and Kerala" he added.

Meanwhile, according to report Sena activists were detained while trying to cross over to Karnataka. As a precautionary measure, the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation stopped by services from play to Karnataka. The Karnataka police stepped up vigil along with border, with over thousand police personnel deployed to avoid any untoward incidents.

Meantime Shiv Sena (Udhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut demanded Belagavi and surrounding Marathi-speaking areas along

the Karnataka-Maharashtra border be declared as a Union Territory.

Karnataka-Maharashtra border issue dates back to 1957 after the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines. Maharashtra had laid claim to Belagavi, which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency as it has a sizable Marathi-speaking population. Bommai recently sought a merger of "Kannada-speaking" areas in Maharashtra's Akalkot and Solapur and had also said some villages in Jat taluka in Sangli district wanted to join the southern state.

Maharashtra to be showcased during G20 Summit : CM Eknath Shinde



DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde called for greater efforts in showcasing Maharashtra to the world during the G20 Summit that is scheduled to be held in Maharashtra soon.

Shinde made this call following an all-party meeting in regard to the G20 Summit held recently in Delhi chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, besides Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and others.

He said that 14 meetings would be held by the G20 Summit in Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur and Sambhajinagar (Aurangabad) in Maharashtra, which would be an opportunity to highlight branding and development of projects in the State for which speedy works are being carried out.

Later, the Chief Minister said that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be inaugurating the first phase of the "Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray" Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg on December 11.

Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis drove on a trial run/inspection of that route along the Nagpur-Mumbai Super communication Expressway for which 530 kms of the 700-kms-long project had

been completed.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister noted that a separate independent ministry has been formed for "Divyang" persons with disabilities on the occasion of the International Day for the Disabled.

Around 2063 posts will be created for this department with provision of Rs 1143 crores by the State Government, he said, adding that Maharashtra is the first State in India to establish such an independent ministry for differently-abled people in the State.

Shinde said that this historical decision to form this independent ministry had come off demands for this purpose without any problems and this Ministry would be having an official of Secretary level.

The views of the differently-abled also would be taken into consideration while making any related policies, he said adding that the Prime Minister has assured of providing all possible assistance for establishment of this Ministry including providing sufficient funds for the same.

He also announced that the Government has decided to provide 75,000 government jobs to unemployed youth in the state, while also directing the Home department to withdraw all cases registered against differently-abled persons who had been agitating

in the past in this regard.

Lauding the efforts of the Chief Secretary and Social Justice Department for completion of the process of establishing this Ministry, the Chief Minister said that the Government -- while accelerating the speed of development -- is also focusing on maintaining its social commitments.

The Chief Minister also directed the Raigad District Collector to conduct a joint survey with Public Works Department officials to assess the adverse impact of widening of the Pen-Khopoli National Highway on families from Kamarli village on that route.

Project-affected persons and their families -- from houses and shops belonging to 15 locals -- had been highlighting issues over the road widening while demanding adequate compensation for the same.

The Chief Minister also thanked the President Draupadi Murmu, the Prime Minister and Union Home Minister for according approval for the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act recently.

The Amendment will pave the way for redevelopment of dangerous and cess buildings in Mumbai while also providing a huge respite for the housing sector in the State and Mumbai, he said.

The Maharashtra Government had sent on July 28, 2022 the information and documents related to the pending redevelopment scheme.

This new law means cess buildings -- whose construction came to a standstill or was left incomplete -- can be acquired by MHADA for redevelopment. At present, there are 56 such buildings in Mumbai city.

PM Modi remembers Ambedkar on his death anniversary



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday paid homage to Babasaheb Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvan Diwas.

"On Mahaparinirvan Diwas, I pay homage to Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar and recall his exemplary service to our nation. His struggles gave hope to millions and his efforts to give India such an extensive Constitution can never be forgotten," the Prime Minister tweeted.

Known as the Father of Indian Constitution, Ambedkar had breathed his last on December 6, 1956, less than two months after he had converted to Buddhism, fulfilling his declaration of "I will not die a Hindu".

SGPC's signature campaign for release of Sikh prisoners receives positive response

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The signature campaign launched by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee for the release of Bandi Singhs (Sikh prisoners) is receiving a positive response. Under this campaign, which was started on December 1, people are demanding release of Sikh prisoners who have completed their sentences by filling proformas at several historical Gurdwaras in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.

Moreover, people are also joining this campaign in foreign countries and digitally. SGPC secretary Partap Singh in a statement issued here today said that since the first day, there is great enthusiasm among the people towards this signature campaign. He said that the process of filling proforma was started at about 25 Gurdwaras in Punjab and Haryana under the first phase, which is being extended further. He said that a signature campaign has been started through the SGPC



Sikh Missions in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi also, in continuation of which proformas are also being sent to Sikh Missions in other parts of the country to demand the release of Sikh prisoners.

He said the process of filling proforma through online medium is also ongoing and the people can connect to this case digitally through SGPC website and social media platforms.

Partap Singh informed that till Tuesday, more than 1.20 lakh proformas were filled under this signature campaign for the release of Sikh prisoners at different Gurdwaras and about 5,000 forms have been filled online. He

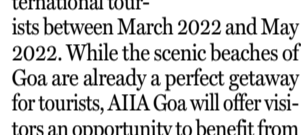
said that in the next few days this campaign will be extended to educational institutions and other Gurdwaras as well as to the village level.

Meanwhile, SGPC member Gurpreet Singh Jhabbar has held meetings with local people to connect them to this signature campaign in Australia. He said from Australia, that Punjabis have been made aware about the signature campaign there. During these meetings, the Sangat has been informed about filling the form online and the Gurdwara managements have expressed their commitment to actively promote this movement in the country.

AIIA Goa to open new pastures of medical value tourism

FW DESK

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the satellite centre of All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in Goa on Sunday. Already a much-loved tourist destination for Indian and international travellers, Goa is also poised to become a hub of Medical Value Tourism with the launch of AIIA - Goa. Inbound tourism in Goa is already beginning to pick up post pandemic and the destination hosted over 19 lakh domestic and 34,000 international tourists between March 2022 and May 2022. While the scenic beaches of Goa are already a perfect getaway for tourists, AIIA Goa will offer visitors an opportunity to benefit from India's diverse systems of traditional medicine and healthcare practices covered under the Ministry of Ayush. All India Institute of Ayurveda in Goa is envisioned to be a gateway to Ayurveda for holidaymakers, generating greater potential for Medical Value Tourism in Goa.



tomized window covering solutions like curtains and different types of blinds.

The biggest attraction however is the Design and Develop service available in-store for home owners looking for tailor made solutions for their home. With a portfolio of over 50,000 products in different categories sourced from over 23 countries around the world, and the option to create completely customized looks for customers' homes, one-stop-shopping destination for all home needs in India.

Danube home, the uae's leading brand open store in Bengaluru

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru



most loved one-stop-shopping destination for all home needs in the GCC. The brand opened two showrooms in Hyderabad in the last few years and this is its third store in India. The new Danube Home store showcases a vast collection of top quality indoor and outdoor furniture, furnishing, chandeliers, carpets, curtains, modular kitchen, kitchenware, and tableware. It also has a host of sanitary ware like bathtubs, shower enclosures, bath fittings, and modular kitchen solutions. The showroom also offers cus-

tomized window covering solutions like curtains and different types of blinds.

The biggest attraction however is the Design and Develop service available in-store for home owners looking for tailor made solutions for their home. With a portfolio of over 50,000 products in different categories sourced from over 23 countries around the world, and the option to create completely customized looks for customers' homes, one-stop-shopping destination for all home needs in India.

On this occasion, Director General, Border Security Force, Pankaj Kumar Singh, summarizing the historical aspects of the force in his address, described the journey of BSF which after being raised with just 25 battalions has now evolved into the largest border guarding force of the world with 193 battalions and a strength of more than 2.65 lakh brave men and women deployed in every kind of extreme terrain, temperatures and other challenging scenarios.

DG BSF also emphasised the achievements of various formations and institutions of BSF in the areas of operations, sports, adventure, welfare, bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries and various other fields.

The atmosphere of Jammu and Kashmir is changing- Women entrepreneurs shared their experiences on reaching PITEX

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The atmosphere of Jammu and Kashmir is changing now. While the people of Kashmir are getting aware of their rights, Kashmiri women entrepreneurs are also promoting their businesses by reaching Punjab and other states. Where Kashmiri women were earlier not allowed to come out of the door of the house, now they are becoming an example for the women of India. These views were expressed by the business women who were here from Jammu and Kashmir to participate in the ongoing PITEX.

Shahina Akhtar of Srinagar, who reached here to take part in the ongoing 16th Punjab International Trade Expo in Amritsar, is giving employment to dozens of women along with her. She said that till a few years ago



women were not allowed to work in Kashmir. Now the thinking of the people of Kashmir is changing. Earlier girls were killed in the womb, now the girls of Kashmir are becoming role models for the country.

Mehroon Bali, who came from Jammu and Kashmir, said that she used to make paintings. Through Pitex, she has got such a

platform where she can not only promote her product but can also earn money. Madhatlat brought cosmetics to PITEX, made from organic and natural herbs. She mentioned that till some time ago, she was confined to her house but now she has started going far and wide with her products and is also getting cooperation from the male members of the house.

Danube home, the uae's leading brand open store in Bengaluru

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Danube Home, the UAE's leading home improvement and furniture retail brand, opened its third showroom in India, at Marathahalli, Bengaluru. The grand inauguration was done by the KGF fame actress Srinidhi Shetty Miss Diva Supranational 2016 and attendance with top management of Danube Home.

Adel Sajjan, Managing Director, Danube Group said on occasion "We are very excited to bring the very best of the gulf to this diverse metropolitan city and are excited to see how our brand performs in this market. The selection and range of products we have is extremely vast. I can confidently say that we have something to cater to every need and every design aesthetic." He added.

Danube Home is synonymous with affordable luxury and is the

BSF organize its 58th Raising Day for the first time in the history of 57 years in the bordering town of Amritsar

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

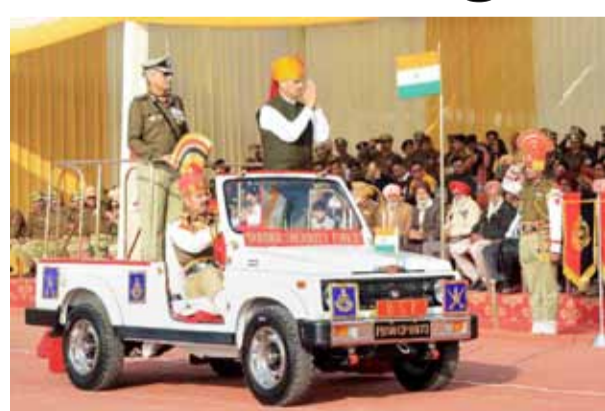
Border Security Force, India's First Line of Defence, organized a ceremonial parade at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (Punjab) on the occasion of its 58th Raising Day.

Border Security Force, the world's largest border guarding force is deployed along 6386.36 km of International Border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. For the first time in the history of 57 years, this ceremonial Raising Day Parade has been organized in the holy city Amritsar (Punjab), in a rich traditional atmosphere of fervour and gaiety. Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai took salute of the impressive parade as the Chief Guest.

During his address on the occasion, the Minister lauded the parade and the decision to organize the event in Amritsar, Punjab and the significance of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" being commemorated this year. Paying rich tributes to the brave hearts of BSF who

laid down their lives in the line of duty, he reminisced the role of BSF in various historic events like the 1971 War when BSF personnel fought bravely against a numerically superior force despite being in the nascent stage of its raising.

He lauded the role of BSF as India's First Line of Defence while deployed in every kind of terrain and extreme weather, the various welfare measures that have been implemented in the forces by Government of India and made special mention of the Plantation Drive made by BSF. He said that the nation is grateful and will always stand by the security forces for the dedicated service to the motherland. He applauded the role of BSF in protecting the sovereignty of the nation and said that the Government of India will leave no stone unturned to provide the best technological equipment, and infrastructure facilities to ensure that the operational challenges arising due to the present day geo-political scenario are fully met. Stating that all welfare requirements of troops will be accorded top priority, he eluci-



dated the various programmes which have been initiated by the Government of India to ensure that all force personnel and their families are cared for. He also emphasised on the importance of border area development and the proactive role being played by BSF for the addressing the same.

During the parade, well turned out contingents of different Frontiers of Border Security Force marched past the inspection dais, showcasing the Seema Praharis' valour, saga and commitment to the nation. The parade comprised a march past

of 12 foot contingents including Mahila Prahari contingent, decorated officers & men, the famed Camel contingent and Camel Band, mounted column, Dog squad, communication contingent displaying the technological advances by the force, special appearance by BSF Bagpipers (men & women).

He also visited the 'BSF Martyr's Column at SHQ BSF Khasa, Amritsar (Punjab) and laid a wreath at the Martyr's Column of the personnel who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

He bestowed the Force per-

sonnel with Police Medals for Gallantry to NoK of brave hearts who made the sacrifice in the line of duty and to the serving BSF personnel, and President's Police Medals for Distinguished Service to serving and retired personnel for their services. The prestigious 'General Choudhary Trophy' was awarded to 66 Bn BSF for their exceptional performance. He also released the annual 'Borderman' Magazine of the Force.

A thrilling Dog show by NTCB BSF trained dogs, battle drills show by Camel mounted praharis, Horse contingent, Gajraj & Chetak Drill by CSMT BSF team that involved dismantling, obstacle crossing and assembly of motor vehicle, adrenaline packed daredevil motorcycle show by Seema Prahari women team and Jaanbaaz mens team.

Earlier, last evening on 03rd December 2022, Nityanand Rai visited border areas of JCP Attari, witnessed "Beating the Retreat" Ceremony parade and BOP Pulmoran in Amritsar sector where he

Gangsters spreading terrorism through their network on NIA radar

SATISH HANDA
Chandigarh

After the death of gangster Harvinder Singh alias Rinda against whom large number of criminal cases including murder, attempt to murder, supply of arms and drugs through his network were registered by Punjab police managed to flee to Pakistan via Nepal to escape his arrest by the police and took shelter of ISI in Pakistan to spread terrorism in India supplying arms, RDX and drugs, mainly heroine from Pakistan through drones near Indo-Pakistan border in Punjab with the help of his network in Punjab further making supplies in other part in country. After recent information about the arrest of another hard core terrorist Goldy Brar at California in USA alleged prime accuse in murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala and a Hindu leader also most wanted in more than two dozen crimes including murders and ransom demand by the police in several states there will be a relief in criminal activities in northern states in the country to some extent. According to National Investigation Agency (NIA) report there are large numbers of hard core criminals spreading terrorism in the country on their radar.

After the incident of recovery of 48 mobile phones from prisoners lodged in Ambala central jail in a month apart from another 22 mobile phones burnt down or damaged by the prisoners themselves on the information of strict checking by jail security staff, CID in the state during investigation was able to find out that hard core criminals, members of gangster groups and number of senior former government bureaucrats and businessmen arrested by state Vigilance Bureau Haryana in past some time are keeping mobile phones inside the jail illegally and the members of gagster groups are still running criminal network from inside the jail. Information reveals that Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar recently had a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah to review the situation and take action in this regard when according to sources decision has been taken for strict action against terrorists by NIA which conducted raids on few terrorists in past sometime.

In past some time as well as recently police arrested few members of the gangster groups working on the tips of prominent criminals either locked in jails or outside as well as few operating from other countries supplying illegal arms, drugs and demanding ransom from businessmen threatening to kill them were arrested in Haryana. Earlier, ransom demand was being made on Watts up from abroad but now it has been observed that gangsters locked in jail or in other countries are operating the game of ransom demand through mobile phones registered in other countries. Haryana chief Minister during recent meeting with Union Home Minister as well as police experts from different states suggested that gangsters lodged in jails in northern states should be shifted to jails in southern, eastern or western states and vice versa in case of Atiq Ahmed a crime mafia from U.P was locked in jail at Ahmedabad in Gujarat state. The suggestion was approved by the government enabling to reduce terrorist activities by the prisoners lodged in jails.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) recently carried out search at as many as 13 locations in three states and two Union Territories as part of its crackdown on the alleged nexus between terrorists, gangsters and drug smugglers. Information reveals that the searches were conducted in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Union Territories of Chandigarh and Delhi. The raids and searches were conducted in Fazilka, Taran Taran, Ludhiana, Sangrur and Mohali districts of Punjab having maximum number of terrorist activities, besides conducted raids at Yamuna Nagar district of Haryana, Sikar district of Rajasthan, few other districts in northern part of country and Delhi/NCR area to dismantle and disrupt the emerging nexus between terrorists, gangsters and drug smugglers running their criminal network in India as well as from abroad.

India, Germany can bring G-20 allies together

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock's visit to India and talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar have set the stage for a more updated bilateral relationship. The two sides signed an agreement on mobility and migration that boosts travel for students, researchers and investors and businesses, and the meeting was preceded by Germany's agreement to fund renewable energy projects worth a billion euros. The year 2022 has seen intense high-level engagement, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi made two visits to Germany — for the India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin and the G-7 outreach summit in Bavaria. The leaders also met at the G-20 summit in Bali. In 2023, Scholz is expected to be in Delhi, in spring, and again in September for the G-20 summit in India. On the multilateral stage, Baerbock, a leader of the German Alliance 90/Green party, made countering climate change an important issue where New Delhi and Berlin can cooperate at the G-20 under India's presidency. Jaishankar spoke of the need to keep pushing for UN Security Council reform, where India and Germany have been part of the 'G-4' grouping since 2005. Baerbock also walked back previous controversial comments calling for the "United Nations track" to resolve the Kashmir dispute. The substance of the relationship will be tested in continuing differences over the war in Ukraine. Jaishankar's line to journalists was that India's imports of Russian oil, a national interest necessity, remain a fraction of the fossil fuels Europe continues to buy. For India, it will be necessary to work more closely with Germany to bring all western partners on board with Modi's plans to forge "global unity", without letting the deep divisions with Russia derail consensus on important tasks such as fighting climate change, inequality, poverty and the digital divide.

LETTERBOX

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

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

THE FINANCIAL WORLD

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DR. HARVINDER KAUR

Child Labour in India and Sustainable Development Goal



India is among the countries having a significant number of child labourers. "Substantial variation in child labour estimates exists across the South Asian countries. In absolute terms, child labour in the 5-17 age group is highest in India (5.8 million), followed by Bangladesh (5 million), Pakistan (3.4 million) and Nepal (2 million)," according to the ILO report titled 'Child Labour in South Asia'. Child labour typically means the employment of children in any manual work with or without payment. It is a deep-rooted social evil in India. As per the 2011 Census, in the age group 5-14 years, 10.1 million of 259.6 million constituted working children. The UN general assembly in 2015 adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), one of which was to eliminate all forms of Child labour by 2025. India as a country has accepted this goal. The present situation of child labour in India is distressing. A research report by the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation has estimated that in 2021, the total child labour population in India is 81.2 lakh. This figure is expected to decline further to 74.3 lakh by 2025. Even though there was a decline in the number of working children to 3.9% in 2011 from 5% in 2001, the decline rate is grossly insufficient to meet target 8.7 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is to end child labour in all forms by 2025. The top three states which will together have half of the total child labourers by 2025 in the country will be Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra, it said. The pandemic has compounded the existing situation of child labour, thus making it difficult to achieve the global goal of ending child labour. According

to an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report, the Covid-19 crisis threatens to reverse the progress made globally in eliminating child labour. There would be a rise in child labour—for the first time in the last two decades—because of millions of children are being pushed into it. Children in developing economies and populous countries are more vulnerable. During the pandemic years, the Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA)—a co-organisation of KSCF founded by Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi in 1980 to liberate and rehabilitate exploited children has rescued more than 10,000 child labourers across 16 States. According to the National Crimes Records Bureau (NCRB) 2020, the cases registered under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act in 2018, 2019 and 2020 were 464, 772 and 476, respectively. The top five states recording the maximum number of offences were Telangana (147 cases), Karnataka (54 cases), West Bengal (41 cases), Assam (40 cases) and Andhra Pradesh (37 cases). To formulate a plan for eliminating child labour, urgent mea-

asures are required. A holistic approach is needed—from legislative measures to a viable rehabilitation strategy, from poverty alleviation and socio-economic development to awareness generation and education. Alongside this, the rescue of child labourers has to become a priority for the country's law enforcement agencies. Also, the measures initiated by the government require effective implementation. In 2016, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 2016, was amended, thereby making the offence of employing children cognisable and providing stricter punishment for such offences. It also framed the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Central Rules along with the model state action plan enumerating action points to be taken by State Governments. The union government also implemented the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme to rehabilitate child labour, which has been included under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Eliminating child labour by 2025 remains a priority task.

In India, inequality, lack of educational

opportunities, slow demographic transition, lack of decent work and social protection, traditions and cultural expectations all contribute to the persistence of child labour. Child labour and exploitation doesn't only pose a threat to national economies, but also present negative short and long-term consequences for children, such as denial of education and weakened physical and mental health. In view of the current scenario, few policy prescriptions are suggested. First, given the critical role that mothers' education plays in mitigating child labour, schemes to promote education among females that are already in place need to be improved upon to include more beneficiaries. Second, the better quality of government schools, particularly in rural areas, needs to be ensured. Although policies such as midday meals and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have come a long way, efforts must be directed towards imparting quality education such that the parents find it beneficial to send their children to school. Third, the positive impact of reservation of seats in education and public employment is probably the reason behind the lower incidence of child labour in urban areas with a higher SC/ST children population. Thus, steps need to be taken to ensure that people belonging to the backward castes in rural areas are also made aware of their rights. Lastly, policies must be focused not only on increasing per capita income but should also guarantee its equitable distribution, especially in urban areas. There should be introspection, on the one hand, and strategic planning, on the other, so that children receive their inalienable rights—a happy childhood, education and justice

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



NARVIJAY YADAV

IF WORK IS STARTED IMMEDIATELY IN THE MANNER OF A ROCKET LAUNCH, THEN IMAGINE WHAT WILL BE YOUR SPEED IN LIFE. THE 5 SECOND RULE CAN BE USED IN A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS AND CAN WORK WONDERS FOR ANYONE.

The 5 Second Rule can do the magic

To say that there are 365 days in a year and 12 months, but some people cleverly take out 13 months in a year. These are the managers of telecom companies, who charge you for 13 months instead of 12 months every year. Sometimes their one-year is also 15 months long. Jio, Airtel, and Voda-Idea, all use the same tactic. They make their tariff so cleverly that they charge you money for 13 months in a year and you do not even realize it. If you do not believe it, then have a look at their tariff plans. A month maybe 30 or 31 days long in the calendar, but these companies' monthly recharge plans are of 28 days only. Some plans are of 24 days, some are even 21 days. Most plans are for 28 days. If you want to take a large plan of three months, then it is 84 days and not 90 days. Similarly, their two-month plan is for 56 days instead of 60 days. They are the expert players and nobody even complains about this permanent cheating behaviour. This is a matter of cleverness, but in actual life too, by planning and acting wisely, anyone can stretch a year for 13 months instead of 12.

Would you like to know how you can do this? If we plan well, we can make every day have more working hours than



merely 24 hours. Taking some extra time off every day would mean making more than 13 months a year. This year I got an opportunity to read two books on time management. The first was 'The 5 AM Club' by Robin Sharma, and the second

was 'The 5 Second Rule' by Mel Robbins. Recognizing the importance of waking up at 5 AM, renowned motivational author Robin Sharma developed a plan twenty years ago, which he tried on his clients and transformed their lives. Then he wrote the

book, in which the benefits of getting up at 5 in the morning and taking some personal time for yourself have been described in detail. In the hustle and bustle of the day, a person does not get enough time for himself, but if you wake up early in the morning, do exercise, yoga, meditation, and plan the day, the whole day becomes more productive and you will be ahead of everyone else in the race.

In the book 'The 5 Second Rule' by Mel Robbins, the countdown is based on the launch of the rocket. If you watch any video of a rocket launch on YouTube, you will find that the rocket blasts toward space as soon as the numbers are counted as five, four, three, two, one! Similarly, if we count the numbers from five to one while thinking of doing something and leave bed in a moment, then neither exercise will be difficult, nor starting work immediately. When the idea of doing something new comes in the mind of people, they hesitate or become lazy. But if work is started immediately in the manner of a rocket launch, then imagine what will be your speed in life. The 5 Second Rule can be used in a variety of situations and can work wonders for anyone.

Narvijay Yadav is a senior journalist and columnist. Views are personal

BOOKS: REVIEW

Paintings reveal miseries of women engaged in fisheries

A book 'Waves of Art', which is a part of an artistic campaign launched by the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP), reveals the work of 52 artists from four countries.

The book has 71 lively artworks explicitly sketching the status and conditions of female workers, bringing forth both the miseries and power of the women in the fisheries sector of the countries bordering the Bay of Bengal.

BOBP, an intergovernmental fisheries advisory body aimed at highlighting the roles played by women, including their issues and achievements in aquaculture and fisheries in South Asia.

Artists, who have taken part in this venture, are from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives.

The book contains works of professional artists, scientists and subject matter specialists in the sector. The artistic representation grabbed the attention of many stakeholders and the public while the artists assembled to draw their paintings during the 8th Global Conference on Women in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF8) held in Kochi recently. The book has a collection of works representing

women's unending battle with odds to make a living, poor working conditions posing risks of health issues, determination and strength to fight for empowerment, and power to conquer success — blending reality in the sector.

The drawings throw light on women multitasking to tide over misfortune and engaging in community and resource conservation.

The backbone of many coastal households, women are also represented as real warriors and powerful individuals in mainstream life. The book includes life sketches of women as inland fishers, fish farmers, fish vendors, fish farmers, workers in post-harvesting. "Artists from different countries voluntarily joined the campaign to attempt to portray the emotions, power, strength and achievements of women in the sector they chanced upon in their life", said P. Krishnan, Director of BOBP, which serves as the think tank on transboundary and contemporary national issues of the member countries concerning fisheries management.

The book was brought in association with Arnawas Vasudev Charity as part of the Waves of Art campaign.

'As art is more powerful than the usual way of presentation, we decided to take the art route to create public awareness of this issue and to express solidarity to the women working in fisheries'

"As art is more powerful than the usual way of presentation, we decided to take the art route to create public awareness of this issue and to express solidarity to the women working in fisheries," added Krishnan.

Out of a total of 52 artists from these four countries, 18 from Kerala together contributed 24 paintings to the book, which has a total of 63 artworks representing India. The book contains works of professional artists, scientists and subject matter specialists in the sector. Portrayals of women from Kerala's backwaters, post-harvesting units and fish markets have found a place in the publication. The artistic representation grabbed the attention of many stakeholders and the pub-



'Waves of Art'
By Dr P. Krishnan
Bay of Bengal
Programme
71 sketches

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The backbone of many coastal households, women are also represented as real warriors and powerful individuals in mainstream life. The book includes life sketches of women as inland fishers, fish farmers, fish vendors, fish farmers, workers in post-harvesting, etc.

"Artists from different countries voluntarily joined the campaign to attempt to portray the emotions, power, strength and

achievements of women in the sector they chanced upon in their life", said Dr P. Krishnan, Director of BOBP, which serves as the think tank on transboundary and contemporary national issues of the member countries concerning fisheries management. The book was brought in association with Arnawas Vasudev Charity as part of the Waves of Art campaign.

"Waves of Art campaign aims to highlight issues in the fisheries sector in need of larger public support. This time we have taken the theme - 'Women in Fisheries'", he said. The campaign is not limited to a specific geographical location, instead, it draws the attention of both artists and the public alike across India and neighbouring countries, he added.

"A whopping 50% of those employed in the seafood sector are women and most importantly they constitute 90% of seafood processing units. Unfortunately, they are not given a proper representation and their mighty presence and highly valued role played by them are hardly recognised in the mainstream. Even as the female workforce greatly helps carry forward the sector, their issues and problems are neither addressed nor resolved", Dr Krishnan said, adding that the majority of the women workers get low wages and work in poor conditions, leaving them with many health issues.

Punjab's Verka will open 625 new booths in state: Vijay Kumar Janjua

CHANDIGARH: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to strengthen the government institutions and give boost to the cooperative movement, the Punjab Government has prepared a plan for the expansion of Milkfed. In a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Vijay Kumar Janjua, approval was given to open 625 new milk booths in the state and to open a permanent office in NCR to expand the scope of Verka products.

Chief Secretary Janjua said that Cooperative institutions such as Milkfed are directly connected with the farmers, which procure milk from the farmers at a good price and manufacture high quality products and sell them to the customers at reasonable prices. In view of the increasing



demand for Verka products, there is a plan to open a total of 1000 new booths in Punjab, of which 625 booths were approved in the first phase today. These places come under various government departments of the state for which all the administrative secretaries have been asked to allot booths. With this, while youth will

get employment, people will get Verka products at door step. He asked the Milkfed officials to identify places where there is high footfall and high demand for opening booths in the second phase. Apart from this, it was also asked to advertise Verka products aggressively. In order to expand the scope

of Milkfed in the NCR (New Delhi-Gurgaon-Noida), the Chief Secretary approved the opening of a new office in New Delhi, for which he asked the Secretary PWD to identify sites at Nabha House. Mr. Janjua said that in the year 2021-22, 19.17 lakh liters of milk was procured per day (LLPD) and 11.01 lakh liters of packed liquid

milk was sold per day. Milkfed has set a target of purchasing 29 LLPD and selling 18.50 LLPD of packed liquid milk by the next five years (2026-27).

It was decided to increase the number of checking mobile vans to prevent adulteration of milk and milk products in the state so that the campaign against adulteration can be strengthened at the ground level. Similarly, it was considered to authorize veterinary officers to draw samples of Milk, Milk Products and other food stuff as per the provisions of FSSAI act.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary Cooperation Anurag Agarwal, Secretary PWD Neel Kanth Awadh, MD Milkfed Amit Dhaka, General Managers Harminder Singh Sandhu, Renu Dhar and Sanjeev Sharma.

Now travel across 184 nations with 1 Airtel 'World Pass' data roaming pack

NEW DELHI: Airtel on Tuesday launched a 'World Pass' traveller data roaming pack that works seamlessly across 184 countries.

The 'Airtel World Pass' data pack starts from Rs 649 for one day validity with unlimited data (500MB high speed) with 100-minute calling (local/India) for both postpaid and prepaid options, and goes up to Rs 14,999 with unlimited data (15GB high speed) and 3,000 minute calling with 365-day validity (postpaid).

"This offers our customers one pack for the globe, significantly greater value, allows them to control what they use on the app and allows for emergency data usage long after the pack allowance is over," said Shashwat Sharma, Director Consumer Business, Bharti Airtel.

The company said that with this, users do not need to buy multiple packs across multiple



countries or transit airports. Airtel 'World Pass' offers 24x7 call-centre support from any corner of the world, free of cost.

"A dedicated number 99100-99100 available for all international travelling customers, serviced with a network and experience specialist squad for a real-time resolution of issues," said the company.

In addition, customers will

have unlimited data available for emergency usage and messaging applications and voice calling rates have been slashed by up to 90 per cent.

"All controls are in the customers' hand where they can manage their entire International roaming needs on the Airtel Thanks app, with real time updates on usage, billing amount or addition of data or minutes as needed," said Airtel.

Foodtech platform HealthKart raises \$135 mn from Temasek, A91 Partners

Foodtech platform HealthKart on Monday said it has raised \$135 million in a funding round led by Temasek, with participation from A91 Partners and Kae Capital.

The multi-channel nutrition retailer said the funds raised will be deployed towards the growth of in-house direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands, increase offline distribution, expand international operations and make select acquisitions.

"Driving fitness and preventive health by addressing the nutritional gaps is a systemic trend which is taking off in a big way in India. With HealthKart's R&D capabilities and omnichannel distribution infrastructure, we are excited to lead the way," said Sameer Maheshwari, Founder and CEO, HealthKart. At more than Rs 1,000 crore annual revenue run rate, HealthKart has two leading brands - MuscleBlaze and HKVitals. MuscleBlaze now has 25 per cent share of India's sports nutrition market while HKVitals has 20 per cent share of online health supplement market, the platform claimed. "It is a digital-first pioneer which has successfully transitioned into an omnichannel business, and achieved market leadership in the past five years in the segments it operates in," said VT Bharadwaj from A91 Partners. The company said its products are being used by more than a million consumers every month and are widely distributed across multiple channels -- healthkart.com, D2C websites, offline grocers/chemists, 140+ HealthKart offline stores -- as well as leading e-commerce and quick commerce platforms.

Travel fintech platform SanKash to hire over 500 professionals in India in next 6 months



Travel fintech platform SanKash on Monday said it plans to hire 500 professionals in India over the next six months.

The platforms said that the new hires will fuel SanKash's sales and operations feet on street capability to cater to its existing travel merchant base of 6,000 spread across 250 cities, and increase its ground presence at 150,000 travel point of sale which dominate the domestic travel market. "With the market picking up post-Covid, travel merchants are seeing significant growth in bookings compared to the bygone year as consumers' confidence is gradually returning," said Abhilasha Negi, Co-founder and Head HR, SanKash.

The travel and tourism market in India is anticipated to touch \$125 billion by FY27 from an estimated \$75 billion in FY20. "Along with the surge, the travel merchant base is also witnessing blitzkrieg expansion. The fresh hiring is directed at catering to this segment," said Negi.

The tourism sector is propelling the country's economic growth and creating

large-scale employment opportunities. The sector contributed 5.8 per cent or Rs 13,161 billion to India's GDP in 2021. Founded in 2018 by Akash Dahiya, Manu Pal, and Abhilasha Negi, the Gurugram-based startup has built a plug-and-play application programming interface (API) platform that provides several travel products and facilitates the payment for these products and services online. It follows a 'Travel Now Pay Later' business model. SanKash plans to service 1 million customers by 2025, as tourism revived after two years of the pandemic.

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Auto parts manufacturing sector feels threat due to entry of e-automobiles

SATISH HANDA
Rohtak / Ludhiana

The entrepreneurs of auto parts manufacturing sector in Haryana and Punjab states while talking to The Financial World expressed worry suspecting drastic drop in sale of their products due to fast arrival of e-automobiles in the process of manufacturing by large number of automobile manufacturers in the country likely to adversely affect their future business suspecting a drastic drop in their sale. Most of the auto parts manufacturers at Rohtak in Haryana and Ludhiana in Punjab manufacturing auto parts at present has started looking for a change in their manufacturing alternate products to remain in business.

According to information, there are thousands of micro, small and medium enterprises manufacturing auto parts at Rohtak, Faridabad and Gurugram in Haryana state most of them working as original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) for large number of automobile companies not only in India but also exporting to other countries.

There are thousands of auto parts manufacturing units in Punjab also at Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Phagwara and other districts in the state supplying auto parts to automobile manufacturers as well as replacement markets in the country were seen in the state of worry about their future likely to have severe shrinkage in their business since there are nearly 2000 moving parts in an automobile requiring frequent replacement due to

wear and tear, whereas in case of e-automobile vehicles there are lesser number of moving parts in the vehicles having lesser wear and tear likely to have squeezed future replacement market in these automobiles.

Information reveals, there are more than 2000 small and medium units manufacturing auto parts in Punjab doing business for amount worth over Rs 10000 crore annually, but due to non-availability of amenities



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Information reveals, there are more than 2000 small and medium units manufacturing auto parts in Punjab doing business for amount worth over Rs 10000 crore annually, but due to non-availability of amenities

they are unable to face challenges, moreover these units are facing severe challenges from spare parts being imported from China causing severe crisis to auto parts manufacturers in Haryana and Punjab states due to their lesser prices as compared to locally manufactured products.

According to Avinash Gupta former chairman of Association of Indian Forging Industries, government should pre-

pare a future road map timely due to fast changing trend. The president of Apex Chamber of Commerce & Industry Rajnish Ahuja told that the automobile manufacturers are frequently introducing different models of vehicles in their range severely affecting replacement market of spare parts presently reduced up to 50-60 percent. Meanwhile, President of Automobile Association of India Gurpragat Singh Kahlon said that recently government has withdrawn 15% export duty on steel as such manufacturers are worried over hike in production cost of auto parts. Information reveals that total sale of auto parts business in domestic market in the country has been recorded as 57 Arab Dollar having export for value worth Rs 19 Arab Dollar as per data available up to year 2021 and the industry providing employment to nearly 50 lakh persons in the country at present and total sale of auto parts in the country is likely to expand to nearly 200 Arab Dollar by the year 2025 due to fast rising number of automobile vehicles in the country.

16th Punjab International Trade Expo to begin from Thursday in Amritsar

TRADERS FROM AFGHANISTAN, EGYPT, THAILAND AND TURKEY, PAKISTAN TO PARTICIPATE

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The 16th Punjab International Trade Expo (Pitex), being organized by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the Punjab Government, will begin in Amritsar on Thursday. This time around 450 exhibitors from many States of India and abroad are arriving at Pitex.

Amritsar District Deputy Commissioner Harpreet Singh Sudan while talking to Media Persons on Wednesday formally announced the launch of PITEX and said that the people of Amritsar and surrounding districts eagerly wait for PITEX where they will get different



products under one roof and the Amritsar graph touches new heights in trade and commerce. The Punjab government is hosting the event.

Deputy Commissioner said that during the last 15 years, Pitex has created a distinct identity not only in Punjab but also in foreign countries.

R.S. Sachdeva, Chairman, Punjab Chapter of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry informed that a seminar on Entrepreneur-

ship Conclave will be organized on 8th December and Virinder Sharma, Director, MSME will join as Guest of Honour. Sachdeva informed that the MSME conclave will be organized on December 9 where experts will talk about various initiatives and schemes for upscale MSME.

A session on Invest promotion is being organised on 10th December at 11 AM where CM Punjab, Bhagwant Mann will be joining as Chief Guest and

Cabinet Minister for Investment promotion Gagan Anmol Mann will join as Guest of Honour another session on sustainability and of Green Hydrogen is also being organised on 10th December in the afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, Naveen Seth, Assistant Secretary General, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that this time traders from Afghanistan, Egypt, Thailand and Turkey, Pakistan have brought their products. States of Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Jharkhand, UT of Jammu and Kashmir are participating in India.

Seth said that apart from many reputed industries of Punjab, Ministry of MSME, Textiles, NABARD, National Small Industries Corporation, Jute Board, and Invest Punjab, along with many ministries of Punjab and Central Government are cooperating.

Cement makers plan to hike price by Rs 10-15 per bag in Dec 2022



NEW DELHI: The price of cement is hardening across the country and since August this year, the rates have gone up by Rs 16/per bag, said Emkay Global Financial Services Ltd. According to a report by the company, in November the prices went up by about Rs 6-7/bag. While the prices remained flat in Western and Central parts of the country, the rates hardened in Northern, Eastern and Southern regions, Emkay Global said. According to the report, the cement companies are attempting further price hikes of Rs 10-15/bag across the country this month.

DC attorney sues Amazon for stealing \$60 mn in tips from delivery drivers

District of Columbia (DC) Attorney General Karl Racine has sued e-commerce giant Amazon for stealing consumer tips worth \$60 million from delivery drivers through a deceptive, illegal scheme.

In his lawsuit, Racine alleged that Amazon's scheme tricked consumers into thinking they were increasing drivers' compensation when "Amazon was actually diverting tips to reduce its own labour costs and increase profits".

"Workers are too often taken advantage of and not paid their hard-earned wages. What's more, consumers need to know where their tips are going. This suit is about providing workers the tips they are owed and telling consumers the truth," Racine said in a statement late on Wednesday. "Amazon, one of the world's wealthiest companies, certainly does not need to take tips that belong to workers. Amazon can and should do better," he added.

Last year, Amazon settled with the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) after a lawsuit alleged it had withheld more than \$60 million (or about one-third of total customer tips) from Amazon



“Workers are too often taken advantage of and not paid their hard-earned wages. What's more, consumers need to know where their tips are going. This suit is about providing workers the tips they are owed and telling consumers the truth,” Racine said in a statement late on Wednesday. “Amazon, one of the world's wealthiest companies, certainly does not need to take tips that belong to workers. Amazon can and should do better,” he added.

Last year, Amazon settled with the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) after a lawsuit alleged it had withheld more than \$60 million (or about one-third of total customer tips) from Amazon

ing to the lawsuit.

In 2015, the company launched its Amazon Flex service, which offers quick deliveries of Amazon products through Amazon delivery drivers.

During the checkout process, Amazon encouraged consumers to tip their delivery drivers, offering a default preselected tip amount and assuring consumers that 100 per cent of the tip amount would go to the drivers.

In 2016, Amazon allegedly changed its driver payment model so that a large portion of these tips did not go towards increasing drivers' compensation but were instead used to pay a portion of what Amazon had already promised to pay the driver, according to the lawsuit.

"Amazon continued to assure consumers that 100 per cent of tips would go to drivers despite the fact that the company was secretly using these tips to subsidise its own labor costs and increase profits," it added.

As a result of its deceptive tactics, Amazon experienced significant cost savings. Amazon was yet to react to Racine's complaint.

Samsung Electronics appoints its 1st female president

SEOUL: Samsung Electronics on Monday promoted a female executive to the president of global marketing for its mobile business, in the first move to tap a female talent for the top post. Lee Young-hee was promoted to the president of the Global Marketing Center for Samsung's Device eXperience (DX) division that oversees its mobile business.

She is the first female president at Samsung, the country's biggest conglomerate, to come from outside the founding family, reports Yonhap news agency.

Lee Boo-jin, the first daughter of late Samsung Electronics Chairman Lee Kun-hee, is currently serving as the president and chief executive of Hotel Shilla, a Samsung affiliate.



Lee Young-hee joined the tech giant in 2007 and was promoted to vice president in 2012. Previously working at L'Oréal, she is credited with successfully promoting the image and brand of Samsung's Galaxy mobile phones.

Samsung expected the promotion to serve as a chance for other talented female employees to challenge themselves to climb career ladders.

Bengaluru witnesses the highest digital payment transactions from Jan to oct 2022: Wordline India

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Worldline India (WLN) has released an analysis of the transactions processed by them in the first 10 months of CY22 (January-October 2022) has derived some unique insights. Bengaluru has topped the list in terms of volume at INR14.82mn as well as the value at INR 36.2bn of transactions. Festive season sales and a rise in consumption has helped Bengaluru take top spot in digital payments transactions. Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai and Pune are the other cities who are in the top 5 list of highest digital transactions. Category-wise grocery, restaurants, clothing and apparel E-Commerce and gaming



witnessed the highest volumes. The period from January to October 2022, saw frequently visited physical merchant categories like grocery stores, restaurants, clothing and apparel, pharmacy and medical, hotels, jewelry retail, specialty retail, household appliances, and departmental stores while in the online space category wise, e-commerce (shopping for goods and services), gaming, utility

and financial services together accounted for over 86% in terms of volume.

Ramesh Narasimhan, Chief Executive Officer - India, Worldline, today both customers and sellers are being more receptive towards digital payments. Digital payments are gradually becoming line a commodity and forming a subtle yet an integral part of our lives. The swift adoption of digital payments can be witnessed with each passing quarter. Popular payment instruments like UPI, cards, PPIs are already clocking over 23 billion transactions in quarter. We are glad to share our analysis of out transactions processed for the top 5 cities in India with highest digital transactions" he added.

IMF hails strong economic recovery in Seychelles: Local media

The IMF has welcomed the "very strong" economic recovery of the Seychelles economy, Seychelles News Agency reported, citing Seychelles Finance Minister Naadir Hassan.

This came after the IMF board completed its third review of Seychelles' economic performance on Thursday, allowing the island nation to draw new funding under the 32-month Extended Fund Facility, Xinhua news agency reported.

"This approval of the implementation of the economic reform program by the IMF board is a further indication that the government's decisions have proven to be the right ones so far and, more importantly, that the actions



taken have been responsible and are laying the foundation for Seychelles' prosperity," the news agency quoted Minister Hassan as saying on Saturday.

The IMF said in a report that Seychelles' economic recovery remained very strong in 2022, fuelled by a faster-than-expected rebound in the tourism sector.

By the end of September 2022, tourist arrivals were 125 per cent higher than in the same period in 2021, with stronger-than-expected demand from Europe and the Middle East.

It added that the recovery was accompanied by significant fiscal consolidation and

social support for the most vulnerable.

However, the IMF warned that while Seychelles' economic outlook is positive, "it remains subject to risks, including a deteriorating economic outlook in many of Seychelles' key tourism markets, high food and fuel prices and their effect on the most vulnerable, a resurgence of Covid-19, higher-than-expected inflation, and an increase in non-performing loans from old dependent loans."

Seychelles and the IMF have agreed on an economic reform programme under the Extended Fund Facility at the end of July 2021, due to the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the country's economy.

Rate hike by RBI on expected lines; taming inflation to help economy: ASSOCHAM

FW DESK New Delhi

The 35 basis points (BPS) increase in the policy rate by RBI is on the expected lines, though there is a signal that the rate hike intensity is being softened, apex industry chamber ASSOCHAM said.

"The rate hike is as per our expectations. In fact, ASSOCHAM had suggested a band of 25-35 BPS and the Monetary Policy Committee has maintained that band. Given the global macro-economic scenario and the inflationary pressure, hardening of the benchmark interest rate was unavoidable. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das' assurance that the central bank would ensure adequate liquidity in the system is reassuring for



the industry and trade." ASSOCHAM President Sumant Sinha said.

"While the hike in the REPO rate by 35 BPS to 6.25 per cent was given, RBI's focussed attention on taming inflation would eventu-

ally deliver us a sustainable economic growth. Despite the challenges in the global economy and uncertainties with regard energy prices, supply chain and geo-political situation, India remains amongst the fastest growing

economies of the world, as elaborated by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. Going forward, ASSOCHAM expects the Indian economy to grow close to seven per cent," chamber Secretary General Deepak Sood said.

The optimism is borne out by double digit growth in credit expansion for the last eight months. However, this growth in credit can be made sustainable if the lending rates are not increased any further. ASSOCHAM expects the unfolding scenario on these lines.

The chamber also welcomed other policy measures like introduction of single-block-and-multiple-debits functionality in UPI and hedging facility for gold exposure to Indian entities in the international market.

Instant grocery delivery app Getir acquires rival Gorillas for \$1.2 bn



Quick grocery delivery platform Getir has announced that it is acquiring its German rival platform Gorillas in a deal that has been reported to be around \$1.2 billion.

Media reported that Getir has closed the acquisition of its competitor.

"Markets go up and down, but consumers love our service and convenience is here to stay. The super fast grocery delivery industry will steadily grow for many years to come and Getir will lead this category it created 7 years ago," Getir Founder Nazim Salur said in a statement.

Turkey-based Getir didn't disclose financial details for the deal but said in a statement that it "underscores how Getir leads consolidation in this sector."

Several of Gorillas' investors will be paid a combined \$40 million in cash, in addition to receiving equity in Getir, according to reports.

In May, Getir announced that it would slash 14 per cent of its global workforce and more than 4,000 were impacted.

Gorillas also laid off hundreds of its employees and exited markets generating less revenue, like Italy and Belgium.

In 2021, the company was valued at \$3.1 billion in a private financing round, led by German food delivery company Delivery Hero.

Getir operates in several countries, such as the U.K., Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal, including the U.S.

According to reports, the combined entity is now valued at \$10 billion.

FAME and PLI Schemes promotes use of electric vehicles in the country

FW DESK New Delhi

Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries, Krishan Pal Gurjar in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today informed that to promote the use of electric vehicles in the country and to make their manufacturing cost effective, following three schemes have been formulated by the Ministry of Heavy Industries:

Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India): The



Government notified Phase-II of FAME India Scheme initially for a period of three years commencing from 1st April, 2019 with a total budgetary support of Rs. 10,000 crore. The Scheme was extended for a further period of 2 years up to 31st March, 2024. Under FAME-India Scheme phase-II, incentives

are provided to buyers of electric vehicles in the form of an upfront reduction in the purchase price of electric vehicles. The incentive is linked to battery capacity i.e. Rs. 10,000/KWh for e-3W and e-4W with a cap 20% of the cost of vehicle. Further, the incentive/subsidies for e-2W has been increased to Rs. 15,000/KWh from Rs. 10,000/KWh with an increase in cap from 20% to 40% of the cost of vehicle w.e.f. 1st June, 2021.

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Automotive Sector: The Government on

15th Sep., 2021 approved the PLI Scheme for Automotive Sector with a budgetary outlay of Rs. 25,938 crores. Electric vehicles are covered under this PLI scheme. PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC): The Government on 12th May, 2021 approved PLI Scheme for manufacturing of ACC in the country with a budgetary outlay of Rs. 18,100 crore. The scheme envisages to establish a competitive ACC battery manufacturing set up in the country for 50 GWh. Additionally, 5GWh of niche ACC technologies is also covered under the Scheme.

Indian Banks' Association, FIEO to organise sensitisation programmes on promoting rupee trade

NEW DELHI: Indian Banks' Association and apex exporters body FIEO will organise sensitisation programmes in different parts of the country to educate stakeholders on modalities of rupee trade, an official said.

It was decided on December 5, when the finance ministry held a review meeting with commerce ministry officials, CEOs of banks, and



exporters to promote cross-border trade in the rupee. An RBI representative gave

clarifications of issues raised by export promotion councils and concerned banks on the matter "and it was decided that the Indian Banks Association and FIEO (Federation of Indian Export Organisations) will jointly organise a sensitisation on rupee trading arrangement so that bankers, as well as exporters, get clarity on how to do this," the official said.

Itel launches Magic X Pro with 4G high-speed hotspot that connects up to 8 devices

NEW DELHI: Itel, a leading mobile brand for Bharat, on Friday announced the launch of Magic X Pro 4G Phone in India which is touted as a path-breaking initiative to provide superior connectivity experience to the consumers.

Available for just Rs 2,999 with a two-year service warranty, the Magic X Pro provides high-speed hotspot connectivity that can connect up to 8 devices.

The feature phone also supports 12 languages: English, Hindi, Gujarati, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Punjabi, Bengali, Odia, Assamese, and Urdu, backed with dual 4G VoLTE, the company said in a statement.

"In the era of smartphones, feature phones are still relevant to certain user segments, especially those at the hinterlands and below Tier 3 markets across the country. These users find usage of feature phones to be easy and many a times use it as their secondary device," said Arijet Talapatra, CEO, TRANSSION India.

Magic X Pro will be available in blue and black colour variants and will be available at both online and offline outlets. "Being the No. 1 feature phone mobile brand with over 28 per cent market share, itel continues with its vision of empowering the aspirational Bharat with its cutting-edge technology and futuristic innovations. itel keeps working



towards bringing the best to this segment, and the launch of Magic X Pro is a testimony to that," Talapatra added. It is power-packed with a 2500mAh battery that ensures the effective functionality of every feature. Another pathbreaking feature of the Magic X Pro is the music app Boom Play. While the feature phone segment still relies on FM radio and preloaded songs for music lovers, Magic X Pro allows users to listen to music online.

The built-in BoomPlay allows users to stream 74 million songs from around the world in various genres such as movies, bhakti, and so on, said the company. "Magic X Pro is a masterpiece feature phone that comes with high-speed internet browsing, a Hotspot hub, a 2-year service warranty, and many other innovative features which are exciting and relevant for this segment," Talapatra added.

The Magic X Pro is power-packed with 4G VoLTE technology and boasts a beautifully curved and compact 2.4-inch (6.1 cm) QVGA display. The phone has eight preloaded games, along with KingVoice assistance.

Over 2.15 lakh UDAN flights operated under RCS

A total of 453 routes have commenced, operationalising 70 airports, including two water aerodromes and nine heliports, under the government's regional connectivity scheme (RCS).

The Ministry of Civil Aviation launched the RCS-UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) in October 2016 to stimulate regional air connectivity and make air travel affordable for the masses.

More than 2.15 lakh UDAN flights have operated and over 1.1 crore passengers have availed the benefits of UDAN flights so far. The scheme has been able to provide air connectivity to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities at affordable



rates and has transformed the way people travel.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on Thursday said that the UDAN scheme is applicable for a period of 10 years from the date of notification

of the scheme. "The government has set a target to operationalise 1,000 UDAN routes during the currency of the scheme and to revive/develop 100 unserved and underserved airports/heliports/water aerodromes

by 2024," it said. The ministry informed that the government has approved a budget of Rs 4,500 crore for the revival of the existing unserved and underserved airports/airstrips of the state governments, Airports Authority of India, PSUs and civil enclaves.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI), the implementing agency, monitors the progress for the revival/development of awarded aerodromes under UDAN and the same is reviewed by the ministry in consultation with the stakeholders from time to time.

Ashneer takes a dig at media as BharatPe sues him, family for Rs 88.6 cr fraud

NEW DELHI: Ashneer Grover took a dig at the media saying that how long are they going to sell the same story about him, after the Delhi High Court issued notice and summons to BharatPe's former Managing Director and his kin in a plea filed by the company seeking orders to restrain them from making defamatory statements against the company.

In its suit, running into 2,800 pages, BharatPe has claimed damages worth Rs 88.67 crore from Grover, his wife, and his brother for alleged cheating and misappropriation of funds.

"Come on Press: Ek story kitni baar bechohe! Saal ke shuru mein bhi same - end mein bhi same. Even I am bored with this (How many times are you going to do the same story? It was the same at the beginning of the year,



and same now)," he tweeted in a frustrated tone late on Thursday.

"Kuchh to naya karo -- paise ke liye creativity mat kill karo yaar (do something new, do not kill creativity for money)" He added, without mentioning BharatPe or the lawsuit against

him or his family members to avoid the court's wrath. The next court hearing in the BharatPe case is in January.

The damages sought include a claim for payment made against the invoices of non-existent vendors amounting to Rs 71.7 crore, a claim for Rs 1.66 crore penalty paid to GST authorities, payments totalling Rs 7.6 crore made to vendors purportedly providing recruitment services, payments of Rs 1.85 crore made to a furnishings company, payments for personal expenditures up to Rs 59.7 lakh and payment of Rs 5 crore damages for loss of reputation to the company caused by tweets and other statements made by them.

In its suit, the fintech company claimed that a Rajasthan-based travel company had raised invoices for foreign tours twice, once for Grover and his wife and the second time for their children. The family also used the company's funds to travel abroad.

The suit further claimed that the Grovers used company funds to pay the rent and security deposit of their posh duplex and for home appliances, too.

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In its suit, the fintech company claimed that a Rajasthan-based travel company had raised invoices for foreign tours twice, once for Grover and his wife and the second time for their children. The family also used the company's funds to travel abroad.

The suit further claimed that the Grovers used company funds to pay the rent and security deposit of their posh duplex and for home appliances, too.

Punjab govt to Launch new industrial policy Very Soon: Nijjar

Industry heal thyself; A Robust and clean system within the state and the country will aid us go Global;



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Punjab Local Government Minister Inderbir Singh Nijjar has said that the new industrial policy being brought by the Punjab government will take care of industries of all categories. Apart from experts, the role of industrialists will be important in making this policy.

Appreciating the PHDCCI for organising the 16th Edition of Punjab International Trade Expo, 2022 and also for keeping a special session on Empowering MSMEs said that it was the need of the hour to address the concerns of MSMEs to recover from the post Pandemic effects.

Citing an example of a 50% increase in the stalls this year in PITEX, 2022, as compared to last year, in addition to participation of 6 countries, he mentioned that these numbers are a showcase of flourishing trade.

Addressing the concern over increased migration of the youth to Canada, he mentioned that it is due to lack of robust systems that the youth is opting to move out of the country.

He said that till we build robust and strong systems within the states and the country, going global and international will not be of any help for development. Industry heals itself and Industry skill itself, said the Minister, adding that MSME generates 96% of employment in the Indian industry and hence the industry should come together to help each other grow for a holistic and inclusive growth.

The government will extend full support and assured to address all concerns relating to industry, especially the MSMEs for its upliftment and growth, said he.

Rice millers & liquor contractors causing heavy revenue loss to Haryana government

SATISH HANDA Karnal/Sonipat

Fraud of value worth over Rs 200 crore has been detected in rice mills in Karnal district caused heavy revenue loss to Haryana state government. Sources reveal that few rice millers in Karnal district allegedly sold high quality rice either in open market or exported to Arab countries at higher rates after milling paddy crop supplied by Haryana state government and in lieu supplied lower quality rice procured from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar at much lesser rates to the government thus playing fraud with the state government for amount worth crores of rupees.

According to information there are nearly more than 300 rice mills in Karnal district alone involved in milling paddy crop supplied by the government. Information also

reveals that large numbers of rice millers are involved in selling PR-14 quality rice prepared from paddy as 'cella' rice on higher prices in open market and also saving 4% market fee exempted by the government on paddy crop supplied to rice millers by the state government for preparing rice thus causing heavy revenue loss to the government towards market fee also.

CM Flying Squad during month October this year conducted several raids on rice mills in Karnal district and also registered FIRs against five rice millers allegedly involved in fraud with the government since paddy stocks were found missing during physical verification during raids, which were identified as KM Foods, Budh Ram Foods, Anand Foods situated at Jundla and BG Overseas and Shriram Rice Mill situated at Asandh at Sadar police station

Karnal. According to information, physical stock verification of paddy and rice stocks in both rice mills at Asandh is still going on. However, managing partner of all rice mills at Jundla was also arrested by the police.

A few days ago Excise & Taxation Department Haryana had taken action against a L-13 liquor contractor at Murthal in Sonipat district allegedly sold five lakh cases country made liquor of value worth Rs 18 crore and fraud exposed when such a large number of liquor cases were found short in the godown since the officers of the department at Sonipat including DETC, ADETC and Excise Inspector alleged involved in conspiracy had issued permits to the contractor violating rules were suspended by higher authorities in Excise & Taxation Department Chandigarh with immediate effect, also imposed Rs 18 lakh



fine on liquor contractor and cancelled his license.

Information reveals that during investigation after this incident lakhs of liquor cases in nearly a dozen districts in Haryana state have been found missing in L-1 and L-13 liquor godowns in which the contractors have no record and breach of trust cases are being registered against these

liquor contractors by the State Excise & Taxation Department in the state. According to information the department had recovered amount worth Rs 82.94 crore fine from the liquor contractors during year 2021-22, whereas has already recovered amount worth Rs 48 crore towards fine so far during current year. According to rules, L-1 and L-13 liquor

contractors lift liquor stocks from the distillery as per quota fixed by the department and in case of additional requirement obtain excess liquor permit from the office of DETC in the district after depositing the tax whereas the contractors lifted the stocks on the basis of permits keeping no record of stocks.

According to Collector, State Excise & Taxation Department Ashutosh Rajan licenses are issued to the contractors for the year against bank guarantee or mortgage of property and in case the contractor fails to deposit the amount of tax or fine imposed on them the department recovers the same. Rajan told that that as many as 156 breach of trust cases against liquor contractors in the state have been received, of these 56 cases were found genuine and their license were cancelled, godown sealed and amount worth Rs 48 crore to-

wards fine on them has been collected. He disclosed that during year 2021-22 total number of 254 breach of trust cases were registered against liquor contractors and recovery of amount worth Rs 82.94 crore towards fine has been recovered from them.

Meanwhile, officers of Excise & Taxation Department in the state has intensified action against liquor contractors and taken action against four another liquor contractors in Sonipat district allegedly sold nearly 7.5 lakh liquor cases lifted from the godowns more than quota fixed by the government and during physical verification stocks of liquor were found missing from their godowns and investigation revealed that these contractors had lifted these liquor cases from the godown without having permit from the department as well as depositing tax and illegally sold liquor without keeping record.

INTERNATIONAL

Australia economic growth up 0.6% in 3rd quarter of 2022

Australia has reported slower than expected economic growth for the third quarter of 2022.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on Wednesday revealed that the gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 0.6 per cent in the three months to the end of September, reports Xinhua news agency. In the 12 months to September the Australian economy grew by 5.9%. Economists had widely tipped a 0.7% increase in the third quarter of the year. According to the ABS, growth was driven by a 13.9 per cent increase in transport services and a 5.5 per cent jump in spending at hotels, cafes and restaurants.

Household spending increased by 1.1% from the June quarter. "The September quarter was the fourth consecutive quarter of economic growth, following a contrac-



tion in the September quarter 2021, which was impacted by the Covid-19 Delta outbreak," Sean Crick, ABS head of National Accounts, said in a media release. The portion of Australians' earnings being put away into savings fell from 8.3 per cent in the June quarter to 6.9 per cent.

Employee compensation rose by 3.2 per cent, the big-

gest quarterly increase since 2006. Responding to the data, Treasurer Jim Chalmers said it was a solid outcome amid substantial global uncertainty but warned of further challenges to come. "This paints a picture of an economy which is relatively robust, despite the substantial challenges being thrown at it from around the world," he told reporters.

Australian PM shuts down nuke power debate despite rising electricity prices

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has shut down calls for the country to consider nuclear power options despite rising electricity prices. He had recently declared that proponents of nuclear as a carbon-neutral energy source in Australia were wrong, reports Xinhua news agency.

His comments came after Peter Malinauskas, the premier of South Australia, urged both sides of politics to be more mature on the nuclear question, saying the debate has become "consumed by culture wars" rather than based on evidence. In response, Albanese told the

local media that the case for nuclear power in Australia does not stack up, citing waste storage as a key problem. "I haven't changed my view that it's a huge distraction from what we need to do," he said.

The federal budget for 2022-23 forecasts electricity prices will rise by 56 per cent over the next 18 months and gas prices by 44 per cent. Under Albanese's plan, caps could be introduced on the prices of coal and gas. However, some state governments have pushed back against the proposal over compensation for producers.



India's G20 Presidency will boost global economy, open Internet: Sundar Pichai

NEWDELHI: India taking over the G20 Presidency will be an amazing opportunity to build consensus on strengthening the global economy by advancing an internet that is open, connected, secure and works for everyone, Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai has said.

Pichai, who received the Padma Bhushan, India's highest civilian honour, from India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, in San Francisco, said that it is incredibly meaningful to be honoured in this way "by the country that shaped me". "India is a part of me. I carry it with me wherever I go. I was fortunate to grow up in a family that cherished learning and knowledge, with parents who sacrificed a lot to make sure I had opportunities to explore my interests," Pichai said in a blog post



late on Friday. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Digital India' vision has certainly been an accelerator, "and I'm proud that Google continues to invest in India, partnering with governments, businesses and communities over two transformative decades". Google recently announced to invest \$10 billion in India's digital future, working to enable more affordable internet access, build-

ing products for India's unique needs, helping businesses of all sizes in their digital transformation, and using AI to tackle big societal challenges. "We're also investing deeply in digital skilling and have trained over 1 million women through our WomenWill Entrepreneurship Program and over 55,000 teachers in partnership with the government and local organisations," said Pichai.

Innovation empowers more inclusive world for persons with disabilities: UN chief



UNITEDNATIONS: Innovation and technology can be powerful tools for building an accessible and equitable world for all, including persons with disabilities, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said.

The world is confronting a cascade of crises that are disproportionately impacting persons with disabilities, Guterres added in a message to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which fell on Saturday. Transformative solutions are needed to rescue the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, he said, underscoring the importance of the active participation of persons with disabilities in their full diversity, and their full inclusion in all decision-making processes, Xinhua news agency reported. Innovation and technology, he continued, can be powerful tools for inclusion, enhancing access to information, education, and lifelong learning, opening new avenues for persons with disabilities to participate in the workforce and society at large on an equal basis.

He also noted that to realise the promise of technology, efforts are required to close the digital divide and safeguard human rights in the digital space.

Punjabi Sikh woman shot dead outside gas station in Canada



TORONTO: In a "targeted" killing, a 21-year-old Canadian-Sikh woman died after being shot multiple times outside a gas station in the Creditview-Brittannia roads area around 10.40 pm. "Upon arrival police located the victim suffering from apparent gunshot wounds. Life saving measures were attempted however the victim succumbed to her injuries, a Peel Regional Police statement said. Police are on a lookout for the suspect who was dressed in all dark clothing and was observed leaving the scene on foot following the incident. Calling it a targeted incident, the police has launched a homicide investigation. No weapon has been recovered so far from the crime scene, police said. They have asked anyone with information or dashcam footage that may have captured the moments leading up to, during, or after the incident to contact the investigators, adding that there is no threat to the public safety. The incident comes just days after 18-year-old Indian-origin Sikh Mehakpreet Sethi was stabbed to death at the parking lot of a high school in Surrey.

India offers support for diplomatic efforts as Russia, Ukraine trade blame for failure to negotiate

UNITED NATIONS: Even as Russia and Ukraine faced off in the UN Security Council accusing each other of not wanting to settle their conflict through negotiations, India has reminded them of its call for dialogue and diplomacy and offered to support such efforts.

"India has called upon both sides to return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue, and also expressed its support for all diplomatic efforts to end the conflict," India's Permanent Representative Ruchira Kamboj told them in the Security Council on Tuesday.

"India stands ready to support all such efforts aimed at de-escalation," she said pointing out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine about diplomacy and dialogue. "We believe that no solution



can be arrived at the cost of innocent lives," Kamboj said. Without naming it, she also offered mild criticism of Russia for the attacks on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine which have crippled the electricity and water supply networks in parts of the country as winter approaches. "Reports of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in the recent weeks is deeply worrying. We reiterate our grave concerns in

this regard," she said. Briefing the Council during the meeting presided over by Kamboj, Under-Secretary-General Martin Griffiths said "In Ukraine today, the ability of civilians to survive is under attack."

While the temperatures are already dipping below minus 20 degrees Celsius, "the attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, including power stations and heating plants, have left millions

of people without access to heat, electricity, and water", he said.

Russia's Permanent Representative Vassily Nebenzia said that Moscow was taking seriously suggestions from UN members for a diplomatic solution to the conflict and was willing to hold negotiations. But he asserted that neither Ukraine nor the Western countries were interested in a diplomatic settlement. "Ukraine needs peace and Ukraine wants peace," Kiev's Permanent Representative Sergiy Kyslytsya said. "But we harbour no illusions about Russian readiness for peace."

"We also resist the Russian strategy of buying time under the guise of peace efforts' to replenish its military arsenal, to build strongholds in the occupied territories and to prepare for a new attack, be it in two or five or seven years," he said.

SGPC objects to ignorance of Punjab in new agreement for flights between Canada-India

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT AMRITSAR SHOULD BE GIVEN DUE SHARE AS PER CANADA-INDIA AGREEMENT: GURCHARAN SINGH GREWAL

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has strongly objected to ignorance of Punjab and especially Sri Guru Ramdas Ji International Airport at Amritsar in the new agreement regarding flights between Canada and India.

SGPC spokesperson and general secretary Gurcharan Singh Grewal in a statement issued here today said that this is a discriminatory attitude towards the Guru Nagari (the city of Guru) Amritsar, due



to which there is resentment among the Sikhs in India and abroad. He said that under the new agreement, airports have been included for flights from many cities in India, but Punjab and especially Sikhs have been discriminated against by ignoring Amritsar. He said that during the budget session of the SGPC on March 30, 2022 led by SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhani, a special resolution was passed for demanding direct flights from Sri Amritsar and was sent to the relevant ministries of the Government of India, but still

the government deliberately did not give its due share of flights to Punjab. This is unfair to Punjab, he said.

He said that there are a large number of Sikhs living all over the world and the number of Punjab and Sikhs is not small even in Canada. People living in Canada related to Punjab face many problems for transportation. While they have to bear the loss of their valuable time to reach Punjab from Delhi, this also puts a huge financial burden on them.

SGPC general secretary said that this discrimination against Punjab should stop. He appealed to the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi that the due share of flights from Canada to India should be given from the Sri Guru Ramdas Ji International Airport located in Amritsar.

SGPC urge pilgrims to deposit passports for celebrating Khalsa Sajna Diwas in Pak

AMRITSAR: The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has started the preparations to send its jatha (batch of Sikh pilgrims) for attending Khalsa Sajna Diwas (Vaisakhi) congregation at Gurdwara Sri Panja Sahib in Pakistan. The Sikh body has urged the pilgrims interested to visit Pakistan on pilgrimage during Vaisakhi in April 2023, to deposit their passports up to December 31, 2022.

SGPC secretary Partap Singh informed that like every year, the Sikh jatha would visit Gurdwara Sri Panja Sahib in Pakistan on the occasion of Khalsa Sajna Diwas. "This year also, the Sikh jatha would visit Pakistan in April 2023, and the pilgrims have been



requested to deposit their passports up to December 31 with the SGPC's Yatra Department", he said.

Partap Singh said along with passports, the interest Sikh pilgrims should deposit their documents including identity proof i.e. Aadhar or ration or

voter card along with mandatory recommendation of their concerned constituency SGPC member.

He appealed to the Sikh Sangat to deposit their passports and documents in time so that the visa process could be completed timely.

Dutch economy to see slower growth in next 2 yrs

THE HAGUE: The Dutch Rabobank warned that after impressive recovery growth rates in 2021 and 2022, the economy in the Netherlands is expected to witness slower growth in the next two years.

Due to the strong growth in the first half of the year, the economic growth figure in terms of total assets for 2022 is still expected to be 4.2 per cent, the second-largest bank in the Netherlands said in a statement.

"But for 2023 and 2024, we expect a significantly lower growth rate," Xinhua news agency quoted Rabobank as saying.

Scarcity and rising prices continue to plague the Netherlands and important trad-



ing partners, while the government wants to stimulate

the economy, the statement continued.

"In our view, this situation pushes the economy into a 'muddling through' mode: neither strong contraction, nor strong growth. We therefore expect the Dutch economy to grow by just 0.6 per cent in 2023, followed by 1.0 per cent in 2024," it added. "Inflation has fallen slightly in recent months," the Rabobank said. "But that cannot prevent average inflation over the whole of 2022 from ending in double digits. We assume 11.6 per cent, followed by 4.2 per cent in 2023."

In its projections of September 2022, the Netherlands' Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis projected a 1.5 per cent GDP growth for 2023.

Christian Michel alleges abuse in Tihar Jail to UK PM

NEW DELHI: Christian Michel, an alleged middleman in the AgustaWestland chopper scam case, has claimed in a signed five-page handwritten letter from Tihar Jail to UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak that he is "being abused in a Delhi jail" and is being held "without trial, without charge, without bail" since four years.

A source close to the Briton corroborated that the letter dated November 5 is indeed in Michel's handwriting. The communication is copied to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, British Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, and Michel's British lawyer Toby Cadman, among others. Sunak's office did not respond to confirm receipt of the letter or react to its contents. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have been investigating allegations of kickbacks in a 2010 deal to buy 12 AgustaWestland VVIP helicopters for Rs 3,600 crore.

They were asked to do so by the then Defence Minister A.K. Antony in February 2013. Yet, even after nearly 10 years neither has reached a stage of proceeding to trial.

The ED filed a charge sheet against Michel in June 2016 accusing him of receiving a commission to the tune of 30 million euros in the transaction.

Michel denies the allegation. In 2019, the highest court in Italy dismissed any wrongdoing



on the part of Michel, describing the imputations against him as a "hypothesis". Michel pointed out to Sunak that a UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) in November 2020 censured the Indian government and called for his immediate release and reparation to be paid to him in accordance with international law. He complained that the British foreign office told him that "the Working Group is not a judicial body and its opinions are not legally binding".

He went on to comment in the letter: "A pretty shameful thing to write when one considers that the UK is a UN founding member, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the UN." The WGAD report recorded that Michel's lawyers submitted to it that in January 2018 a deputy director of CBI "allegedly attempted to coerce Mr Michel into signing a 20-page pre-drafted statement admitting corruption activities (implicating the Congress Gandhi family) related to the AW case and threatened him with prosecution if he refused to sign".

Indian-origin science teacher wins PM's prize in Australia

MELBOURNE: An Indian-origin teacher in Australia has received the 2022 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in Science Teaching in secondary schools.

Melbourne-based Veena Nair, who is ViewBank College's Head of Technology and STEAM project leader, has been awarded for demonstrating practical application of STEAM to students, and how they can use their skills to make a real impact in the world.

"To be recognised in the Prime Minister's prizes for sci-



ence, I am deeply humbled. I am very grateful to my school, to my colleagues, to my students, and to my family," Nair said in a video message. "Many people know about STEM -- science,

technology, engineering and maths, but STEAM is with an A, which is for Art. Art brings in out of the box thinking, and it brings in creativity because students need steam skills to innovate, to become resilient and to take risks," she said.

As a leading educator in STEAM, Nair has more than 20 years of experience in teaching science-based subjects across India, the United Arab Emirates, and now Australia.

Through her work, she has increased the number of students who receive first round

offers to study engineering and technology subjects at university, especially young women and students from diverse backgrounds.

Nair began her teaching career in Mumbai, where she provided computers to low socio-economic schools and taught students how to code.

Nair's students participate in the Swinburne Youth Space Innovation Challenge -- a 10-week program that sees secondary students competing to create the best experiment to launch into space.

Punjab-origin Rachna Singh becomes first South Asian minister in British Columbia

CHANDIGARH: Punjab-origin Rachna Singh, a postgraduate in psychology from Panjab University here, has created a history of sorts after she was sworn in as Minister of Education and Child Care of British Columbia, Canada.

She is the second Punjabi after Moe Sihota to handle the portfolio, but the first South Asian woman to be appointed to such an important position.

"I am proud to be a part of the government that listens and care for the people. We are committed to free and accessible education to everyone," Rachna Singh told media in a phone interview on Thursday.

"Our government has invested a lot of resources on education since 2017 and will continue to do the same in the



coming years. Since I come from the family of educators and have worked on anti-racism in the past, I have a lens to see the problems of the children of working people and those belonging to visible minority communities," she added.

Both her parents father Raghbir Singh and mother Sulekha,

besides sister Sirjana are teachers by profession. Her becoming an education minister overseas is therefore significant for the family. She had previously served the British Columbia government as Parliamentary Secretary for anti-racism initiatives. She hit the headlines after making a brief address

in the provincial legislature on November 1 in her native Punjabi language. Singh had immigrated to Canada with her husband and a two-and-a-half-year old son in 2001.

She joined Information Services Vancouver as a referral agent to help the victims of substance and domestic abuse.

She later joined Canadian Union of Public Employees and became an active trade unionist and political activist associated with the currently ruling NDP.

She was first elected as a lawmaker in 2017 from Surrey-Greentimbers and re-elected in October 2020.

She has worked as a drug and alcohol counsellor, a support worker for women facing domestic violence, and a community activist.

Pakistan passport ranks fourth lowest in world



NEW DELHI: Pakistan has been ranked 94th, sharing the slot with Somalia, in terms of passport strength while the UAE has topped the list of the world's most powerful ones. According to the list issued by Arton Capital, a Pakistani passport only mandates travel to 44 countries without a visa. The Express Tribune reported. Below Pakistan are Iraq (ranked 95th), Syria (96th) and Afghanistan (97th). In comparison, the passports of Yemen (93rd), Bangladesh (92nd), North Korea, Libya and Palestine (91st) and Iran (90th) have been declared more powerful than that of Pakistan. However, the passport of the UAE has been declared the most powerful across the world. The Express Tribune reported. UAE nationals can travel to 180 countries without a visa. Citizens of other countries, including the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and other countries do not require a visa to visit 173 countries. Similarly, the people of the US, Poland, Ireland, Denmark, Belgium, New Zealand, Portugal and Norway can travel to 172 countries without a visa. Passports of every country in the world became powerful during this year because they are trying to acquire economic benefits by making travel facilities easier. The Express Tribune reported.

Hardy Sandhu's 'Kya Baat Ay' gets a flirtatious touch in 'Kyaa Baat Haii 2.0'

Punjabi singer-actor Hardy Sandhu's 'Kya Baat Ay' now has a revamped version titled 'Kyaa Baat Haii 2.0' starring Vicky Kaushal and Kiara Advani and will be featured in the upcoming film 'Govinda Naam Mera'.

The original upbeat track is given a flirtatious touch in this new version, sung by Hardy Sandhu and Nikhita Gandhi.

Speaking about his revamped version, Hardy said: "Kya Baat Ay" is one of my most popular and loved songs and continues to be an audience favourite. When I learned that we are creating a 2.0 version of the song, I was immediately on board and super excited. Tanishk and Jaani are magicians and Nikhita has added the right amount of glamour to the song with her beautiful voice. Vicky and Kiara deliver a whole new level of energy. I am certain both the song and the movie will receive



an amazing response."

"I am excited for the launch of Kyaa Baat Haii 2.0 and singing it along with Hardy was a lot of fun. Vicky and Kiara make sure the video adds to how impactful and energetic the song is with their performance. I hope the audience enjoys the song," added Nikhita.

In the new track, Kiara and

Vicky are seen dancing to this pop song in stylish yet quirky outfits that fits the mood of the song and complement the attractive backdrops. The lyrics are penned by Jaani, composition by B Praak, recreated by Tanishk Bagchi with the vocals of Hardy Sandhu and Nikhita Gandhi.

Kiara said: "I absolutely love the song Kya Baat Ay. The

2.0 version is a notch higher. Vicky, me, and the entire crew had a lot of fun while shooting for the song. Both the song and its video are super slick and catchy, the female singer has knocked it out of the park as well. I can't wait to know your reactions to the song."

Vicky added that by now it's a known fact that he is an avid fan of Punjabi music.

"Hardy has been one of the finest singers/music composers who I've been listening to since his early days. So, when I was told that we are reviving his track 'Kya Baat Ay', I was thrilled as this is one of my favourites.

"While the song may be known to many as it is a popular number, you shall see a different vibe to this. Kiara and I are also donning a completely new avatar to match the magic of this version of the song that has been beautifully created by Hardy himself along with Tanishk, Nikhita and Jaani."

PARAS ARORA to play lead role in family drama 'Dil Diyaan Gallaan'

'Udaan' actor Paras Arora has been roped in for the upcoming show 'Dil Diyaan Gallaan' in which he will be portraying a character full of positivity.

Talking about the show, he said it is a story of a man in Punjab who is upset as his son went abroad. However, the son who is abroad is also not happy. Sharing his experience of being part of the show, Paras said: "It's a surreal feeling. I look forward to a remarkable experience through my show 'Dil Diyaan Gallaan'. It feels like a homecoming, as an artist, I couldn't have asked for anything better. I am fortunate to have bagged this opportunity as it's definitely something very different from my previous characters."

He said: "When I was told about my character and the storyline that would follow, I was surprised and very excited. This is one special opportunity where a show allows me to perform a character that is so rare, loving, and believes in the goodness of people."

"I can't wait to watch the episodes on television as this show beautifully narrates the story of a family which is parted due to migration. We are putting in our best efforts as a team, and I hope it all reflects on the screen well. Fingers crossed," he concluded.

Paras is known for his role as Chhatrapati Shivaji in the historical show 'Veer Shivaji', Karan in 'Laal Ishq', Vikrant Raheja in 'Dil Hi Toh Hai', Dr Pramod Chautala in 'Kaatelal & Sons' among others. 'Dil Diyaan Gallaan' is all set to start on December 12 on Sony SAB.

POTPOURRI

Dua Lipa credits imposter syndrome for helping her in songwriting

Singer Dua Lipa, who found fame after posting songs on YouTube, said she finds artists who have been stricken with self-doubt inspiring.

The 27-year-old pop star told The Sun on December 4. "A lot of the time I get so inspired by artists that have quite a lot of self-doubt or darkness. I'm like, 'Oh my God, do I have to feel this much pain to be good at what I do?' That is

sometimes what I think, sometimes imposter syndrome can get the better of me. Especially when I'm writing."

Lipa added that she also fears her acting won't be up to scratch when she is under pressure to portray emotional states on camera, reports aceshowbiz.com. Lipa, who has just made



her acting debut in spy movie "Argylle" alongside Henry Cavill, Sam Rockwell, Bryan Cranston and Samuel L. Jackson, said: "It was really exciting. But for me it is baby steps.

Gurinder Chadha on Aaron Taylor-Johnson's Bond bid and making a film in Punjabi

Speaking at the Red Sea Film Festival in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Chadha said: "I had to fight with Paramount Studios at the time," she said about casting Taylor-Johnson as the lead in 2008's 'Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging'.

"I think he's going to be a big star," she told sceptical Paramount executives at the time. "I said, 'trust me', and cast him, so, of course, I will take complete credit," she told the audience, according to 'Variety'.

During an hour-long conversation, Chadha spoke at length about her career and the hurdles she faced within the industry.

"I started off as a BBC news reporter and I found that I couldn't really control the narrative. As a journalist, I had to do what I was told. But it gave me the skills to control the narrative in a way that is accessible to a complete audi-



ence," Chadha said.

Despite focusing on making accessible, commercial films, the director said she still faces challenges to get her projects made. Chadha told the audience her 2019 film 'Blinded By The Light' got turned down by both BBC and Channel 4, even though she believed the project had a broad commercial appeal.

"We hustled and made the film and it was wonderful. We went to Sundance and had this

almighty bidding war. Every filmmaker should have that experience. In the end, we went up to 17 million (dollars) with Warner Brothers. It was a great vote of confidence," Chadha said.

When asked if she suffered from tokenism in the UK, the director, according to 'Variety', said: "I think the opposite because I've been the only one for many years. I think it's a shameful statistic and people are trying to change that.

Asrani looks back at how he copied Hitler while playing jailer in 'Sholay'

MUMBAI: 'Hum angrezon ke zamane ke jailer hai!' This iconic dialogue from the 1975 action drama 'Sholay' is still remembered and much credit for it goes to ace comedian Asrani, who made it immortal. He spoofed Adolf Hitler in his inimitable style and the actor remembers how the dictator influenced his role.

Talking about his character, Asrani said: "When I was signed for the role of a jailer in 'Sholay', the screenwriting duo Salim-Javed and director Ramesh Sippy gave me a book about World War II in which there were 15-20 pictures of Adolf Hitler."

Asrani, who's now 82 years old, has appeared in numerous films and is known for his comedic roles in 'Aaj Ki Taaza Khabar', 'Prem Nagar', 'Chupke Chupke', 'Chhoti Si Baat', 'Rafoo Chakkar', 'Balika Badhu', 'Fakira' and 'Pati Patni Aur Woh'.

He became most popular,



though, because of his character of the jailer in 'Sholay'. He also played supporting roles in many films and appeared as lead actor in the 1977 film 'Chala Murari Hero Banne' and 'Salaam Memsaab', released in 1979. Both were directed by him.

He adds more about his popular character of the jailer, saying: "Not many people know this, but acting schools worldwide have Hitler's voice recorded for training purposes. Hitler had such an influential voice that he could motivate the German army to sacrifice their life. I tried keeping the essence of Hitler alive in a comical way in 'Sholay' with my character of jailer."

LPU hosts 11th annual Celebrations of Antara Dance & Creative Art Studio

FW DESK Jalandhar

Providing the largest platform to the growing and hitherto hidden Indian and international talent, Lovely Professional University (LPU) hosted 11th annual recital reveals of Antara Dance Studio (Jalandhar) at its Shanti Devi Mittal Auditorium.

Commencing the annual show 'Dream Catchers-2022', titled as



'Wings of Joy'; the first group performance echoed liberty for dancing on the song 'Udne Do'. It was followed by online and offline Kathak performances worshipping Lords Rama & Krishna; Guru

Vandana; Thumri dance depicting 'Asht Naayika' for pangs of love by Director Nidhi Mittal, herself; and, many other dance forms. More than 100 students of the studio from different walks of life and age groups performed on beautiful choreographies and compositions.

The most emotional and passionate performance of the concert was performed by the specially-abled students of Mother Teresa School.

It's been an astounding year', says Mrunal Thakur



Actress Mrunal Thakur, who made her Telugu debut opposite Dulquer Salmaan with 'Sita Ramam', shares that she has had quite an amazing year and it will be always special to her. The actress is filled with gratitude.

Mrunal, who started her career with television, has progressed to the silver screen and has delivered films like 'Dharmaka', 'Jersey', 'Batla House' and is currently looking forward to the much-anticipated, 'Pippa'.

Summing up her year, Mrunal said: "I have had an amazing 2022 and this year is always going to be special to me. There are some amazing projects lined up that are coming up next year. Now I am looking forward to 'Pippa', which makes me so happy being associated with. It's been a satisfying year for me." 'Pippa' also stars Ishaan Khatter and is based on the Battle of Garibpur that was fought during the India-Pakistan War of 1971. She further mentioned: "It's just gratitude that I am feeling right now for the love I am receiving.



PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILL

Priyanka received equal pay just once in her 20-year career

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas revealed in an interview that her upcoming Amazon Prime Video series 'Citadel' is the first time she's ever received equal pay as her male co-stars. She has been acting for 20 years.

"I've never had pay parity in Bollywood," Priyanka said in an interview for BBC's 100 Women (via The Independent). "I would get paid about 10 per cent of the salary of my male co-actor. (The pay gap) is large, substantially large. And so many women still deal with that. I'm sure I will too if I worked with a male co-actor now in Bollywood. My generation of female actors have definitely asked [for equal pay]," she added. "We've asked, but we've not got it." Priyanka detailed other ways in which she contended against sexism while working on Bollywood productions. "I thought it was absolutely ok to sit for hours and hours on set, while my male co-actor just took his own time, and decided whenever he wanted to show up on set is when we would shoot," she said.

Only reason I would go back to Partition is for healing: Filmmaker Bani Singh



NEWDELHI: Her father, Nandy Singh, was a member of the hockey team that won India's first gold at the 1948 London Olympics. In 2010, the ace sportsman suffered a stroke that paralysed his right side. That is the time when his daughter, filmmaker Bani Singh, conceived the feature documentary 'Taang' (Loving). After all, whenever she would talk to him about those days of glory, his body would relax, and a new enthusiasm would be seen.

Mukesh took loan from vendor of veggies to pay children's school fees

MUMBAI: The late playback singer Mukesh Chand Mathur, professionally known as Mukesh, has lent his voice to some of the iconic songs of Hindi cinema and is credited with defining the soundscape of Hindi films with his association with the likes of Raj Kapoor, Manoj Kumar, Sunil Dutt and Dilip Kumar.

But, often a great artiste is born out of adversities and it holds true in the case of Mukesh. There was a time when the 'Ye Mera Diwanapan Hai' hitmaker was facing financial troubles and had to take a loan from a vegetable vendor near his house to pay the school fees of his children. Nitin Mukesh, the son of the veteran singer, who will be gracing the special episode -- 'Celebrating 100 years of Mukesh' of the television show 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Li'l Champs' shares an anecdote from the late singer's life and says that his father continued long after he delivered songs like 'Awara Hoon' and 'Mera Joota Hai Japani'.

'RRR' above Spielberg's 'The Fabelmans' in 'Rolling Stone' 22 Best Movies list



As 'RRR' emerges as an Oscars season favourite across America, with the Pakistani Punjabi film, 'Joyland', giving it close competition, the influential 'Rolling Stone' magazine has named the "epic Bollywood blockbuster" as one of the 22 Best Movies of 2022.

The S.S. Rajamouli directed historical adventure drama is in patrician company on the international list. Notable among the titles that share space on the list with 'RRR' are Steven Spielberg's 'The Fabelmans' at No. 15 ('RRR' is at No. 12), the much-acclaimed 'Tar' (about the downfall of the famous female conductor of a classical orchestra, Lydia Tar, played by Cate Blanchett) at No. 11, 'The Banshees of Inisherin' starring Colin Farrell

(No. 8), jailed Iranian director Jafar Panahi's 'No Bears' (No. 5), Park Chan-wook's Cannes favourite, 'Decision to Leave' (No. 3), and the list topper 'Hit the Road', a film by debutant Panaha Panahi, son of Jafar. Here's what 'Rolling Stone' has to say about 'RRR': "A ripped, shirtless man narrowly avoiding a midair collision between an angry wolf and an even angrier tiger. A rescue mission involving a sinking raft, a flaming train, a horse, a motorcycle, some rope and the flag of India. A dance-off, complete with some highly choreographed suspender-based moves, that doubles as a class-conscious f*** you."

films, a man kicking an arrow through a tree trunk into another man's head, and an acrobatic sequence involving a hero fighting legions of soldiers while perched on his best friend's shoulders.

"These are just a few of the things you'll see in S.S. Rajamouli's Tollywood blockbuster, although referring to this as a single 'blockbuster' feels weird. Charting the bond between an undercover police officer (Ram Charan) for the British Raj and the rural revolutionary (N.T. Rama Rao Jr.) he's trying to bust, this fit-to-burst story of 'Rise, Roar, Revolt' felt like you were mainlining a century's worth of cinematic epics in one three-plus hour rush." A nod from 'Rolling Stone' may not guarantee an Oscar, but it does give you an idea of the kind of critical acclaim 'RRR' has been garnering from the western media as well as international film personalities.

'Rolling Stone' editors admit that theirs is not a complete list, but the films on it are a good reason for cinegoers not to lose hope in the power of movies to keep drawing back to the theatres, contrary to the dire predictions about footfalls by industry pundits.

The three slaps that made Shakti Kapoor think about giving up on films



MUMBAI: Shakti Kapoor recalls after getting slapped a number of times in a scene from the 1983 movie 'Mawaali', he thought his career was over in the industry. He also shares that initially he wanted to become a hero in movies.

He said: "I did my first comedy film 'Satte Pe Satta' with Paintal. It was a really great film so when Raj Sippy approached me for a comedy role I was like my villainous roles are being appreciated then why does he want me to be a comedian? "After that, I did a film called 'Mawaali'. When I was giving my first shot in the film Kader Khan slapped me and I fell on the ground, then in the second shot Aruna Irani slapped me and I fell on the ground, the third time too the same happened.

"Going through this I got worried thinking that my career is finished. K. Bapaiah was directing the film and Kader Khan was also a part of the film."

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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