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#### REGION



**BJP-LED GOVERNMENT IN HARYANA A CHAMPION IN RISING UNEMPLOYMENT, SAYS RAHUL GANDHI** 



CORPORATES & INDUSTRY **7TH EDITION OF MP GLOBAL INVESTORS SUMMIT BEGINS IN INDORE** 

#### POTPOURRI



**DILJIT DOSANJH IS SET TO PERFORM AT THE COACHELLA MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL** 2023

# Sandhwan appreciated the determination Crypto Currencies equivalent shown by Maan against corruption to gambling: RBI Governor



CHANDIGARH: Appreciating the decision taken by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to end the scourge of corruption, Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan has said that his party had promised to give a clean and corruption-free administration to the people while coming to power

and the Punjab government is fully committed and firm in this regard.

Regarding the decision taken by the Chief Minister about the strike by the government officers, S. Sandhwan said that eliminating corruption from the state is the responsibility of the state government and all the officials

and the all of us should support the government to get them out of its grip. S. Sandhwan said that every official should play his role in it. He said that some people involved in corrupt activities defame all the people. Because of this, it is our responsibility to expose the corrupt people and build a clean society. S. Sandhwan has appealed to

and employees of the Punjab government should support the

government in this regard. He

said that the people of the state

are suffering a lot from corruption

all sections of the people, including officials and employees, to support the campaign launched under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and strengthen the hands of the Chief Minister to end the scourge of corruption.

cryptocurrencies, the central bank recently launched in pilot mode, its own e-rupee or central bank digital currency (CBDC).

"Every asset, every financial product has to have some underlying (value) but in the case of crypto, there is no underlying value. So anything without any underlying, whose value is dependent entirely on makebelieve, is nothing but 100 per cent speculation or to put it very bluntly, it is gambling, "he said. "Since we don't allow gam-

bling in our country, and if you want to allow gambling, treat it as gambling and lay down the rules for gambling. But crypto is not a financial product, "Das added.

He said that CBDCs are the future of money and its adoption can help save on logistic

To counter the growth of and printing costs.

### Congress MP from Punjab dies of heart attack, Bharat Jodo Yatra suspended



JALANDHAR: Congress MP Chaudhary Santokh Singh on Saturday died of a heart attack during party leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Punjab. He was 76 years old.

Chaudhary fell during the rush of the yatra in Phillaur town and was taken to a hospital in Phagwara in an ambulance where he died.

Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa said Chaudhary was walking along with a fellow MP from Kerala and suddenly collapsed. In 2019, Chaudhary became the second-time MP from Jalandhar with a margin of 19, 491 votes.

His cremation will take place on Sunday at 10.30 a.m. at his native Gakhlan Dhaliwal village in Jalandhar.

After a day's break, Rahul Gandhi had resumed his Bharat Jodo Yatra from Ladhowal Toll Plaza in Ludhiana on Saturday morning.

State Congress chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring said the yatra will remain suspended till until the last rites are performed.

"He was a down-to-earth hardworking leader, a pious person and a strong pillar of the Congress family, who dedicated his life to public service from Youth Congress to Member of Parliament, " Rahul Gandhi wrote on Twitter, expressing condolences.

Chaudhary came out with Rahul from Kusht Ashram in Phillaur when he collapsed. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra expressed condolences and praised him for being a dedicated leader and true public servant for the Congress ideology. "Shri Santokh Singh ji was a dedicated leader and true public servant for the Congress ideology. His death has caused an irreparable loss to the Indian National Congress, " she wrote on Twitter. "Santokh Singh Chaudhury, aged 76, Congress MP from

Jalandhar, passed away from a sudden cardiac arrest during the Bharat Jodo Yatra this morning. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, "Jairam Ramesh, Congress general secretary in charge of communications said in a tweet.

"There will be some changes in schedule of the vatra y

#### Punjab govt pulls out from mega textile park bid due to land unavailability



CHANDIGARH: Owing to unavailability of land the Punjab government has withdrawn its application for the centre's mega textile park scheme, informed Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal.

He clarified that the centre has launched productionlinked incentive (PLI) schemes across sectors and does not

discriminate between states. The Minister said that the Centre is building seven mega textile parks for which applications were invited under the PM Mitra scheme.

Setting up more fast track courts for NRIs to be on fast lane in Punjab Giving the reason of Punjab's withdrawal as land availability, he said, "So even if we want, we cannot consider Pun-CHANDIGARH: With the iab under the scheme

### Helmets for Sikh soldiers violate of Sikh Tenets and marayada

CHANDIGARH: Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) President appealed to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to personally intervene against the implementation of the reported move of the Government of India to make helmets mandatory for Sikhs in the country's armed forces.

Describing the move as "provocative and insensitive in the extreme" Badal said that it was not just unprecedented in history but also defied all logic as Sikh soldiers had always remained in the forefront of the country's defense without ever feeling the

need for such helmets in the past. "If details emerging from various sources including newspaper reports are indeed true. then we are surprised that the Government has shown such callous disregard for the time



tenets, norms and practices on a matter of such critical emotional and religious sensitivity. It concerns Sikh Marayada which no one has a right to tinker or trifle with, " said Badal in a letter to the PM, Narendra Modi.

He, however, hoped that the PM would look into the matter and order that necessary action be taken to stop any proposal in this regard. "Not even the British had forced such a decision on the Sikh soldiers. Sikhs are fiercely patriotic people and

have led from the front in 1948, 1962, 1965 and 1971 wars as also in all other military operations including Kargil. Why this sudden development when no Sikh had ever felt the need for such a protection?" asked Badal, adding that he still hoped that the reports in this regard are not true.

**NEW DELHI:** Reserve Bank

of India (RBI) Governor Shak-

tikanta Das on Friday reiter-

ated that crypto currencies are

equivalent to gambling, as their

perceived value is only make

Addressing a media event

believe.

In his letter to the Prime Min ister, Badal also drew Modi's attention to the serious concern expressed by Jathedar Sahib of Shri Akal Takhat Sahib Jathedar Harpreet Singh ji over the reported move of the Ministry of Defence in this regard.

Badal was referring to reports in a section of the press which said that the ministry of Defense had already placed orders for bulk purchase of these so-called "specially designed helmets" for the Sikh soldiers.

#### Withdraw new helmet policy for Sikh soldiers in Indian Army: Harjinder Singh Dhami **AMRITSAR**: Shiromani

Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President

him to withdraw this decision. He said that the decision to implement a special helmet for Sikhs serving in the Indian Army will destroy the unique Sikh identity and Sikh Maryada (code of conduct). He said the turban is not merely a cloth, but it is also a symbol of Sikh heritage besides having spiritual and temporal significance. The commitment of Sikhs to the turban also reflects Sikh pride and adherence to the Guru's command. He said ordering a Sikh soldier to take off his urban and wear a helmet just

is hurtful for the religious sentiments of the community. He wrote to the Defence Minister that the important examples of Sikh soldiers fighting wars

wearing their turbans without exception include the battles with Mughals at the time of Sikh Gurus, the Battle of Saragarhi, the World Wars, and the wars fought by the Indian Army in the past. Even in the Indian Army, the Sikh soldiers serving in The Sikh Regiment, Sikh Light Infantry and Punjab Regiment, are performing their duties diligently to protect the country, he wrote. SGPC President said India is a multi-religious country and the people of different

Harjinder Singh Dhami has raised a strong objection to the new helmet policy of the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, for the Sikh soldiers serving in the Indian Army. He has written a letter to Union Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh, asking

here, Das called for a ban on

cryptos, saying there is no

underlying value in it. Those

supporting it call it an asset or

a financial product, but there

is no underlying value in it, he

added.

ence after the 13th India-US Trade Policy Forum in Washington DC, he appreciated the Sikh enterprise and appealed to the Punjab Government to become more proactive in seeking investment and competing for central incentives.

#### **Punjab administration** has collapsed, time for Governor to interfere, AAP CM should resign immediately: Chugh **JAGMOHAN SINGH**

Amritsar

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh said that due to the lopsided and myopic vision of the AAP government in Punjab there is unprecedented collapse of administration while AAP leadership has completely failed. Reacting to the decision of the PCS officers' going on week-long strike, Chugh said it reflected seriouslyhow the AAP government has crumbled in the border state, which is an alarming situation. Chugh requested the Puniab Governor to intervene in this crisis moment of the state and take a report from the AAP government about the abysmal failure of governance.

Chugh also expressed his serious concern at the Punjab IAS officers' delegation expressing resentment over the Punjab Vigilance Bureau's action against IAS officer Neelima who was recently booked by VB. A delegation of around 50 IASofficers met Chief Secretary VK Janjua and flagged their resentment before them. The officers said that the procedure has not been followed while registering the case against Neelima. Chugh in a statement issued today said the AAP leaders have proved themselves to be thoroughly incompetent to run the state in spite of the big mandate given by the people.

Speaking at press confer- commitment of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to resolve all the genuine grievances of Punjabi Diaspora living across the globe, Punjab NRIs Affairs Department has set the ball rolling to establish more Fast Track Courts especially for cases related to NRIs. NRIs Affairs Minister Kuldeep Singh

Dhaliwal will meet Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court soon to work out the legal and other modalities in this regard. In a meeting with Officials

of NRIs Affairs Department, ADGP NRI, Commissioner NRI Sabha and NIC here at Punjab Bhawan regarding the status of grievances brought during 'NRI Punjabiyan Nal Milni' held across Puniab, the Cabinet Minister Kuldeep Singh

Dhaliwal said that he will meet Chief Justice shortly to work out the legal modalities to expedite the process for setting up more NRIs Fast Track Courts.



The Cabinet Minister also Tehsildars and Station House instructed to depute Legal Ad-Officers (SHOs) to provide all visors to provide requisite legal requisite help and logistic supaid to NRIs. He also ordered port to sort out all the issues concerned Deputy Commisof Punjabi Diaspora. He also sioners to resolve around 50 perasked the officials to spread cent grievances brought during information district wise about these 'Milni Programs' through the concerned NRIs Nodal Oftheir Nodal Officers appointed ficers with their contact details. specially for the cases of NRIs.

The Cabinet Minister further Reiterating the commitment added that the panel of Legal Experts will also be constituted of Punjab Government to take every step for the well being of to extend helping hand to NRIs NRIs, Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal pertaining to resolve their issues also asked the officials of the deat various levels. He also sumpartment to issue Demi-Official moned the report from officials (DO) letter to concerned Deputy about the cases resolved during Commissioner, Nodal Officer, 'NRIs Milni Programs'.

#### because it offers better proteccommunities have the right to serve for the nation while praction to his head, is ignorance to the Sikh's psyche, and his ticing their religion. People attachment to turban. of different faiths working

Harjinder Singh Dhami in Armed and paramilitary said the decision of forcing forces reflect the diversity and Sikh soldiers to wear helmets colors of our nation, he said.

will be shared shortly." Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann tweeted: "I am deeply saddened by the untimely death of Congress Member of Parliament from Jalandhar, Santokh Singh Chaudhury. May God rest his soul in peace."

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla expressed condolences on the demise of Chaudhary and said that the parliamentarian was always vocal on issues of public interest.

### Gear Up For Assembly Polls: BJP leader to J&K unit

#### FW DESK

In an indication that Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir could be around the corner. BJP national general secretary B L Santhosh on Wednesday asked the party's J&K to be ready for assembly polls.

The meeting was also attended by Union minister Jitendra Singh, BJP national general secretary and J&K incharge Tarun Chugh and J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina. Santhosh made the state- in Delhi.

ment days after senior party



leader and Union Home Min- that the assembly elections in the union territory might be ister Amit Shah held deliberations with party functionaries held this year. Government from Jammu and Kashmir has, however, has stayed short of making an official

This has raised the hopes announcement vet.

"A leader is born when he selflessly works for the win of others and the organisation,' In his address to party leaders, Santhosh said. "So you all must devote vourselves to organisational duties.

Union minister Singh said this was the first major election campaign after historic changes in J&K. "We need to contest these elections all together," Singh said adding that the BJP is the only party which has truly cared for the rights of the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Rahul Gandhi meets representatives of farmer organizations, listens to their problems

#### SATISH HANDA

Kurukshetra / Ambala

The Bharat Jodo Yatra, which continues under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, reached Ambala from Dharma Nagri

Kurukshetra. Thousands of women participated in Bharat Jodo Yatra despite heavy smog and biting cold on Monday on the occasion of Women's day. Rahul Gandhi's yatra was warmly welcomed by 50 women on reaching Tyoda village in Shahabad. Rahul Gandhi also met the families of farmers and women farmers who were martvred in the farmer's movement. Farmer leaders of Harvana told Rahul Gandhi that Leader of

Farmer leaders said that during the agitation, MP Deepender Hooda helped in providing water, electricity, medical facilities and sanitation facilities at vari-

ous dharnas. On this occasion, representatives of various farmer organizations of the country, including Haryana, discussed in detail the problems of the farmers, including the MSP guarantee. Farmer leaders also said the current government did not live up to the written agreement made by the government during the farmer's movement last year.

In the meeting held in the presence of former Harvana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, State Congress **Opposition Bhupinder Singh** in-charge Shakti Singh Gohil, Hooda had given financial as-State Congress President Udaysistance of Rs 2 lakh each to the bhan, Deepender Hooda, Rahul families of martyred families. Gandhi listened to the farmers



carefully. During this mainly representatives of farmer organizations including Rakesh Tikait, Yudhveer Singh, Yogendra Yadav, Virendra Narwal, Prahlad Barukheda, Mandeep Nathwan, Joginder Nain, Rajbala, Deepak Lamba, Tejveer, Jagdeep Aulakh, Jogendra Tiger were present.

On this occasion, former Chief Minister of Haryana Bhupinder Singh Hooda said BJP government had failed on its promises of doubling farmers income by the year 2022. The anti-farmer face of the government has been completely exposed. The farmer is feeling cheated. Today the sugarcane

different to the agitation. In 2015-16, the rate of sugarcane was Rs 317, if the income of the farmers had to be doubled, the rate should have been Rs 634," he said, pointing out the rate is only Rs 362 per quintal.

"The income of the farmers has not doubled, on the contrary, the debt and expenditure on the farmers have definitely doubled. The loan on farmers has increased from 9 lakh to 18 lakh crore. The prices of diesel-petrol, fertilizers are increasing rapidly. By imposing tax on agricultural equipment, the government has only reduced the income of the farmers," he added. He said the Congress government in Haryana had increased the rate of sugarcane by a record breaking Rs 193, taking the rate from

farmers are on the streets but Rs 117 to Rs 310. "Along with the government remains in- this, timely payment was also ensured, at the time of leaving the government in 2014, the sugarcane mills did not owe a single penny to the farmers," he pointed out.

Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said brotherhood is increasing in the whole country and the atmosphere of hatred is ending due to Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra. "Immense public support is being received from wherever the Yatra is reaching in Haryana. There is tremendous enthusiasm not only among the public regarding the Yatra, but also given new energy to the Congress workers," he said.

On the initiative of Member of Parliament Deepender Hooda, today the girl students of Government Girls High School

of village Khairampur, Hisar along with their parents met Rahul Gandhi and raised the issue of closure of government schools in the state and shortage of teachers in government schools. These mainly included 10th class student Pooja Rani, daughter of Kiran, Chanchal, daughter of Rajbala and Jyoti. Apart from this, Deepender Hooda also got Rahul Gandhi to meet Haryanvi writers and artists. In which included SP Singh, Subhash Chandra and others. Bharat Jodo Yatra started today from Khanpur Koliya village of Kurukshetra and reached Shahbad crossing Ladwa road. After this, again starting from Saha crossing, Mohra Maulana reached Ambala where the yatra would halt for the night at the new grain market of Ambala Cantt.



### **REGION**

# Punjab CM says stadium, road to be named after braveheart constable



**MANN HOPED THE YOUTH OF THE REGION** WILL JUDICIOUSLY USE THIS STADIUM FOR **TRAINING THEMSELVES TO JOIN THE PUNJAB POLICE AND ARMED** FORCES

SHAHPUR: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Wednesday announced to construct a stadium and name a road after Punjab Police constable Kuldeep Singh Bajwa, who sacrificed his life while combating the anti-social elements.

The Chief Minister, who visited the house of the martyr at his native village in Gurdaspur district, handed over a cheque for Rs 2 crore, of a stadium in the village in

in Haryana state at present has

been identified as 38%, highest

for the beautification of Amritsar city : Dr. Nijjar

including Rs 1 crore ex gratia by state government and Rs 1 crore of life insurance by HDFC Bank, to the distressed family as a mark of respect for his supreme sacrifice for the country.

Noting that Bajwa had attained martyrdom while performing his duty at Phagwara, Mann said that this "humble initiative of the state government is in recognition of the immense contribution of this son of soil towards maintaining law and order in the state' Reiterating the firm com-

mitment of the state government to help the families of the soldiers who sacrifice their life at the altar of the motherland, he said it is the duty of the government. He announced the construction

the name of martyr Kuldeep Singh Bajwa with an ultra modern athletic track.

Mann hoped the youth of the region will judiciously use this stadium for training themselves to join the Punjab Police and armed forces

The Chief Minister also announced to name the road leading to the village of martyr, in the name of Bajwa. He said this initiative is in recognition of the contribution of the braveheart who has sacrificed his life for the sake of the country

He said the financial assistance to family of the martyr is in consonance with the commitment of the government to ensure the well being of the soldiers and their families.

people living below poverty

ine, farmers and laborers to

#### Mann govt will spend Rs. 6.81 cr on development works for the beautification of Amritsar city : Dr. Nijjar SATISH HANDA to get jobs under Start up and

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar while addressing media strongly condemned Congress for making wrong propaganda regarding unemployment rate in Haryana state as 34%, which is incorrect since there is only 6.1% unemployment in the state. He surprisingly said why Congress leaders are projecting such incorrect figures during their Bharat Jodo Yatra. Khattar slammed the Congress for quoting fictional figures projected by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) for which we shall take action against CMIE for quoting unrealistic figures.

Khattar said, Congress leaders are in the habit of making false statements and befool people by spreading false rumours that 34% youths in Haryana state are unemployed as against actual 6.1% as identified in 'Parivar Pehchan Patra Programme' (family id) launched in the state in 2022 in which around 98% families were registered. Khat-

SATISH HANDA

Talking to media persons Home

and Health Minister Anil Vij

said that health department

detective teams in the state will

Squad in the state which have

brought satisfactory results to

control criminal activities in

government offices as well as in

private sector conducting sur-

prise raids. Vij said that he will

control detective teams himself

in order to improve health ser-

vices in government hospital in

the state. After a recent inci-

dent of deaths of mother and

new born child allegedly due

to carelessness of hospital staff

at village Chautala in the state

where thorough investigation in

the case has been ordered. Vi j

Detective teams to improve health

function similar to CM Flying tivities not only in government

services in Haryana: Anil Vij



tar said that there is 2.75 crore population of people between age 18 to 60 of them nearly 6.5 lakh people were found unemployed in the state whereas only about 6% people of age between 18 to 45 were identified only between 2 to 2.5% as such Rahul Gandhi needs to provide correct figures before making a public statement.

Khattar disclosed that during eight years BJP government in Haryana state nearly 33,60,000 persons have been provided employment opportunities and nearly 50,000 Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSME) industrial units have been set up in the state in this period provided employment to more than 12 lakh persons. He said that nearly 9 lakh unemployed youth have been able

have free hand to check a gov-

ernment hospital in the state to

improve health services in the

hospitals as in case of CM Flying

Squad have provided efficient

services to arrest criminal ac-

offices but also in private sector

in the state in past about one

year. Vij warned that lapses as

regard providing health ser-

vices to suffering patients will

not be tolerated at any cost in

the state and stern action will

taken against irregularities in

Vij said that complaints are

being received as regard few

doctors coming late on duty as

such biometric attendance sys-

tem is being installed in all gov-

ernment hospitals in the state

and action will be taken against

this regard.

said that complaints as regard late comer doctors and hospital

Stand up schemes in the state. Chief Minister said, although it is not possible for a government to provide government jobs to everyone, but ruling government in the state provided government obs to nearly a lakh youths and there is a proposal to provide 40,000 government jobs in class III category and 20,000 jobs in class IV category during this year.

Chief Minister expressing regret said that doing this kind of petty politics over such fictional figures is undesirable from a leader of any sensible political party. Khattar said, if needed action would be taken against CMIE for releasing unrealistic figures which during month November, 2022 in its report had showed unemployment rate in Haryana as 29.3 percent which itself was far from the reality as now they are claiming unemployment rate in Haryana as 34% which itself is contradictory seems to be associated with political parties in opposition perhaps working on their tips.

Haryana DGP PK Aggarwal reviews crime, law and order situation



SATISH HANDA

Addressing media persons at Panchkula, Director General of Police in Haryana P.K. Aggarwal said that in order to wipe out crime as well as fast rising drugs and liquor smuggling in the state, decision has been taken for stern action against anti-social elements mushrooming in the state involved in criminal activities within the state as well as in adjoining states in 2023 also. He disclosed that CID in the state has already prepared a list of hard core criminals involved in criminal activities including murders, attempt to murders, ransom demands, kidnappings, rapes, dacoities, drugs smuggling and few of them having links with gangster groups also having number of illegal properties built with black money in the state.

DGP told that Special Task Forces in Haryana state had identified as many as 72 illegal properties in the state owned such hard core criminals, many of them involved in drugs smuggling which were demolished by bulldozers during year 2022. He added that CID has preapared a list of several hardcore criminals having illegal properties in Harayana state yet to be demolished this year. Aggarwal said that state police arrested 11463 anti-social elements involved in criminal activities during the year 2022 which included 334 hardcore criminals, most wanted by the police on which award up to Rs one lakh was declared by the state government for their arrest, which included maximum number of 43 criminals from Faridabad. 40 from Mohindergarh, 28 from Palwal, 26 from Sonipat, 24 from Rohtak 21 each from Gurugram

#### Hooda demands ruling government to issue white paper on rising debt and unemployment in Haryana



#### SATISH HANDA

Former Haryana chief minister and leader of opposition in Haryana Vidhan Sabha Bhupinder Singh Hooda addressing media said that ruling government in the state is responsible for increase in debts of value worth over Rs 4 lakh crore and 37.4% unemployment in the state demanding ruling government to submit white paper on both issues, especially on financial condition of the state. Hooda said, the state government has loans worth Rs 3.25 lakh crore and other liabilities worth Rs 1.22 lakh crore and have come to a situation where the government is taking loans even to pay salaries to the employees, and most of times much delaying in disbursing salaries to the employees. He accused ruling BJP in alliance with JJP government pushed Haryana into the debt trap blaming that during winter Vidhan sabha session the ruling state government did not allowed discussion on various important issues. Hooda said that rising prices of all essential commodities have gone higher by three times, debt have increased four times, crime in the state have increased five times and corruption have witness six times increase in past eight years Manohar government rule in Harvana state blaming that ruling government is not a double engine (BJP & JJP) but a double mouth government. At the same time, Hooda demanded immediate resignation of former Harvana Sports Minister Sandeep Singh against whom a case allegedly sexually attack on a lady coach has been registered by Chandigarh police and it is not possible for the police to investigate the case fairly until alleged accuse submits resignation to Vidhan Sabha. Hooda said that recent 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' organized by Congress for eight days was warmly welcomed by the people in the state in all seven districts it passed through in which the farmers told that government taking no decision on several important issues like cases filed against the farmers during the farmers agitation, refusing to accept their demand for hike in sugarcane price and guaranteed MSP of their crops.

### BJP-led government in Haryana a champion in rising unemployment: Rahul

SATISH HANDA Panipat

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi strongly condemned the ruling BJP in alliance with JJP government in Haryana state on the rising inflation and unemployment among youths during the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' at Panipat in Haryana on Friday

late afternoon. While addressing a huge gathering he raised high question over rising unemployment in Harvana state. He said people also in small and medium in the country. He said, ruling in the country assuring benefi-



earlier a flourishing sector tobeen unsuccessful to control day facing decline and youths rising prices of all essential working in this industry are commodities. jobless. He said unemployment

Rahul Gandhi raised a siren at the historic Panipat field for Congress victory in 2024 polls weaving industries of Panipat, government in the state has cial schemes for the welfare

In a statement issued here

today, Dr. Nijjar today after

inaugurating the installation

of interlocking tiles at a cost

of Rs.40 lakh in Pothohar

Bazaar, Kot Mit Singh and

Khalsa Nagar under Ward No.

38. He said that it is a matter

of great sadness that no one

#### help them financially putting amount worth Rs 72000 in their bank accounts every year. Rahul Gandhi also interacted with people directly during rally. He was accompanied by senior Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge Congress National President, Udaibhan State Congress President and the former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Among others present on the

stage were Kumari Shelja, Randeep Surjewala and Kiran Choudhary.



that both wa SP Aml



Two arrested with 3.5 Mann govt will spend Rs. 6.81 cr on development works



Ambala

the people of the state and to make the life of the people Jashandeep Singh Randha-

kg of opium at Ambala



SATISH HANDA

has taken care of this area for the last 35 years and this area The CIA Staff of Ambala police is completely backward. Dr. arrested two persons hailing Nijjar said that now all the from Bihar and recovered 3.5 facilities will be provided to kg opium from them. Arrested the people in this area and first persons were identified Sahni of all the work of the streets and his accomplish Randhir and drains will be completed. both residents of Harsher vil-He said that our dream is lage of Muzaffarpur in Bihar.

Dr.Inderbir Singh Nijjar said decided to spend 6.81 crore ru- a clean and tidy environment. that the government led by pees on development works for He said that there is no short-

cal Government Minister

Chief Minister Punjab Bhag- the beautification of Amritsar. age of funds for development.

the

of the state easy and

### Warm Welcome to Rahul Gandhi's **Bharat Jodo Yatra in Ambala**

want Mann is fully committed

to provide basic facilities to

government

has

#### SATISH HANDA Ambala

**JAGMOHAN SINGH** 

Amritsar

Warm welcome was given to Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra on Monday when entered Ambala Cantt after covering 255 km distance iof seven districts of the state in eight days. Large number of residents of the town including children, youths, old age persons, women, farmers and entrepreneurs of Ambala scientific industry welcomed Yatra at the National Highway No. 1.

Senior congress leaders present in Bharat Jodo Yatra including AICC media in-charge Jai Ram Ramesh, leader of opposition in Haryana Vidhan sabha Bhupinder Singh Hooda former Haryana Chief Minister, Congress Convener Shakti Singh, HPCC president Uday Bhan, and Rao Daan Singh were present while addressing a press conference. The main issues discussed in

the press conference included Congress leaders expressed



roads observed during Bharat Jodo Yatra which have become worst in past eight years BJP government rule. Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda while addressing said that unemployment, rising prices of all essential commodities, increasing crimes, drug smuggling in Haryana state, drug addiction among youths, corruption in government offices and poor administration by the government

extremely poor condition of are some of the vital issues the ruling government has failed to control.

Hooda said that the farmers in the state demand guaranteed minimum support price of their crops as well as change in land acquisition rules by the government which are unfavorable for them. Hooda said, ruling Chief Minister had assured farmers to double their income but failed to fulfil their promise and the condition of farmers becoming bad to worst.

### Ambala police arrested two persons carrying 7 pistols, cartridges

#### SATISH HANDA Ambala

CIA Staff of Ambala police on secret information arrested two persons carrying illegal arms in 24 hours. Addressing media persons SP Ambala, Jashandeep Singh Randhawa said that police patrollingparty got information that both are carrying illegal weapons. He told that Aman Sonkar alias Bond master mind of a criminal gang was arrested while travelling on foot near Subhash Park Ambala Cantt while plan-



women and children throughout ning a criminal activity. Subhash Parka in Ambala Cantt attracts the day. Police team during search large number of visitors especially recovered from him five country made pistols and four cartridges.

Randhawa told that in another case police on a clue arrested a vouth Bandhan Sharma a resident of HarI Hari near behind BD Flour Mill while moving near Namastey Chowk Ambala Cantt and during search police team recovered from his possession two country made pistols. SP Randhawa told that Aman alias Bond was having seven cases registered againsthim in three different police stations at Ambala including two cases of attempt to murder.

Nandan and Randhir were nabbed by a police team at a special check post that had been set up on a flyover in Ambala Cantonment. The price of the opium seized by police is estimated over Rs 5 lakh.

police had received a tip-off that some peddlers from Bihar would be delivering opium to a smuggler in Ambala. Accordingly, a checkpoint was set up on a flyover in the cantonment area and the both drug supplkiers were arrested.

Randhawa said that the

cause inconvenience to patients to wait for the treatment for a long time and decision has been taken to form a detective team comprising of health department officers as well as political workers to keep an strict eye over activities and bring reforms providing quick and efficient health services to suffering pa-

tients round the clock. Vij while on action mode to

improve health services in all government hospitals in the state going to have health department detective teams will staff neglect.

#### Protest : All Colleges in Punjab to Remain Shut on Jan 18 **JAC AND UN-AIDED**

**COLLEGES SET TO PROTEST** AGAINST STATE GOVT. OVER CENTRALIZED ADMISSIONS

#### **JAGMOHAN SINGH** Amritsar

With no favourable response coming up from state government, the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of Non-Govt Aided Colleges Management Federation (NGACMF), Principals' Associations, Punjab Chandigarh Colleges Teachers Union (PCCTU) and Un-aided Private Colleges' body called for all Colleges shut on January 18.

In a statement issued here today, the colleges in Punjab are fighting against the government «arbitrarily and discriminatory decision to implement centralized admission portal and tinkering with service rules of teachers including lowering retirement age at 58 years ..

In a joint meeting of the JAC and Unaided Colleges at Guru Nanak Khalsa College for Women at Ludhiana, the issue was discussed threadbare and as the government of Bhagwant Singh Mann is not hearing the genuine demands for the Colleges, all colleges will remain closed on January 18.

"We are in dire strait and are taking this extreme step as the government is unresponsive to our demands", said Federation President Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina who chaired the meeting.

He said and Chief Minister and Minister of Higher Education has not even given the times for meeting to discuss issues confronting higher education in Punjab. Even now we appeal the government to address the issues confronting the colleges in Puniab.

He said the government's decision will baldy impact the autonomy of the colleges and is highly discriminatory in nature as state Universities, their constituent colleges and private universities have been kept out of the purview of this so-called admission portal. The higher education institutions are facing acute financial troubles already in wake of the drop in

psence of doctors while on duty staff causing inconvenience to patients. He said, complaints have also been received that few doctors are found missing in their rooms as a result OPD in the hospital suffers when patients sitting outside their rooms have to wait for the treatment. Vij said, he will remain in touch with Chief Medical Officers in all civil hospitals in the state through video conference especially to check and reduce child death rate (IMR) as well as mother death rate ((MMR) in government hospitals due to

admissions as the youth is fly-

ing western countries and thus

there is no demand of such a

portal. "The indifferent attitude

of Bhagwant Singh Mann>s gov-

and Kurukshetra districts. DGP said that among 72 prop erties in Haryana owned by hardcore criminals as identified by CID Haryana were demolished during year 2022 which included maximum number of 35 properties in Faridabad, 9 in Sirsa, 6 each in Kurukshetra and Rohtak, 4 each in Kaithal and Yamunanagar, 2 each in Ambala and Hisar and one in Rewari district. He said, there is a list of large number of illegal properties vet to be demolished in the state shortly.

ernment to the issues confronting the Colleges is forcing us to Aggarwal told media persons adopt the path of agitation and that on an average 956 criminals protest. On Jan 18 all colleges and bale jumpers were arrested by Haryana police every month. will remain shut and memo-He said according to police rerandums would be submitted to Deputy Commissioners in all cord total number 6552 persons district headquarters as neither involved in criminal activities and the Higher Education Minis-4911 bale jumpers were rounded ter nor CM is giving us time by the police during past year, meet them to raise our issues", of them 951 criminals and 912 said Federation Secretary SM bale jumpers were arrested by Sharma. He said the implementhe crime branch and 5601 crimitation of centralized portal has nals and 3999 bale jumpers were been unanimously taken by the rounded by police field units in government and their concerns the state. DGP Haryana told that raised during the meeting with large numbers of criminals includ-Secretary, Higher Education at ing some of them most wanted by Chandigarh had been ignored the state police spreading terror and Speaking orders passed and in the state have been identified it is being implemented through by the police yet to be arrested in the affiliating Universities in order to make Haryana crime free during 2023.



Punjab.

### **NATION**

# Cheaper fuel, jobs and harmony: Rahul Gandhi's promises in letter

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has written a letter to the people of the country in a massive outreach programme of the party, promising cheaper petrol and diesel, gas cylinder at Rs 500, jobs and harmony.

The party on Friday announced that it will deliver Rahul Gandhi's letter to each house along with a charge sheet against the Central government from January 26. The letter is signed off as "aapka apna Rahul (your own Rahul)"

The letter is written in all regional languages and the exercise is an attempt by the Congress to reap the political benefits from the Bharat Jodo Yatra

Gandhi in his letter has tried to touch all the subjects. He mentions that this is written after completing the historic, 3,500 km long Bharat Jodo Yatra where millions of Indians walked with him from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

"It was the most enriching



journey of my life, and I am overwhelmed by the love and affection that every single Indian has showered on us. I heard intently, to all your stories along the way.

He said there is a palpable economic crisis brewing - joblessness among the youth, unbearable price rise, severe farm distress, and a complete corporate capture of the country's wealth...People are worried about losing their jobs, their and their dreams of a better future are shattering.



"There is a deep sense of hopelessness across the country. Today, even our plurality is under threat. Divisive forces are attempting to turn our diversity against us - different religions, communities, regions are being pitted against each other. These forces, which are only a handful in number, know that only when people feel insecure and scared can they sow the seeds of hatred for the 'other'. But after this Yatra, incomes are falling further, I am convinced that this vicious agenda has its limits, and it cannot go on any longer."

He wrote that he will fight to eradicate these evils -- from the streets to Parliament, every single day and determined to create economic prosperity for everyone -- right price for farmers' produce, jobs for our youth, fair distribution of the country's wealth, an enabling environment for MSMEs and entrepreneurs, cheaper diesel, a stronger rupee, and a gas cylinder for Rs 500.

"The people of our country realise that we cannot reach our full potential unless we embrace our diversity and work shoulder to shoulder. I strongly believe that India will reject hatred. We will rise above caste, religion, language, gender, and all other differences that cause rifts in a society. Our greatness lies in our Unity in Diversity. My message to each one of you - Daro Mat! Remove fear from your hearts, and hatred will vanish from within you.'

"The Yatra has renewed my vigour to fight for each one of you. It has been a 'Tapasya'. dreams.

"I understand that my personal and political journey is one -- to give voice to the voiceless, to be the weapon of the weak, to take India from darkness to light, from hate to love, from suffering to prosperity. I will carry forward the vision and values of those who gave us our extraordinary Constitution."

"he Congress family has been working tirelessly for 137 years, first to free, then to unite and then further to build this country and have always brought the country together during the difficult times. Today, again, our country finds itself in a state of crisis

"The 'Hath se Hath Jodo' Abhiyan is our initiative to spread the message of unity and brotherhood. Through this historic Abhiyan, the Congress party is extending its hand to you -- lend a hand, come together to put the country back on the path of building a 'Swarnim Bharat' -- where every single Indian has an equal chance to fulfill their

### Several corrupts involved in frauds worth crores in FCI trapped in 'operation Kanak' by CBI

officials, three are retired, 17

private persons and 20 enti-

ties. Information also reveals

that the agency recovered Rs

80 lakh cash during investi-

gation including Rs 10 lakh

from a female officer found

currency notes hidden in the

washing machine in her bath

According to information,

CBI teams conducted raids

in FCI godowns in six states

which included at Rupnagar,

Sangrur, Morinda, Bassi

Pathana, Fatehgarh Sahib,

Mohali, Sunam, Bhatinda in

Punjab, Dukheri (Ambala),

Gurugram in Haryana, Kolar,

Chikbalpur in Karnatka, Chin-

nai in Tamilnadu, Chandigarh

and New Delhi and also recov-

ered Fixed Deposit documents

of value worth Rs three crore

room during search.

#### SATISH HANDA

The CBI launched 'Operation Kanak' in high level corruption alleged in the Food Corporation of India (FCI) conducted raids at 39 places in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi and recovered amount worth Rs 1.03 crore from senior officers involved in embezzlements in various godowns. According to a CBI spokesman, an network of employees from junior to senior level were found involved in corrupt practices. Sometime ago embezzlements in dispatch of rice and wheat stocks of value worth crores of rupees for supply to below poverty line (BPL) families under government schemes sent to Gujarat and other states in the country were detected when a three members committee was sent to Gujarat which found that stocks were taken out from the bags before dispatches and corrupt employees even didn't spare poor families.

The CBI booked a total of 74 accused and registered in raids found a chain of officers, lower staff working in FIRs against them including godowns, rice mill owners, a DGM ranks officer from grain merchants, brokers en-Chandigarh was arrested. gaged in procurements, all in-Among others booked by CBI volved in nexus of corruption. teams included FCI Executive According to CBI informa-Director Sudeep Singh and tion, it was alleged that alleged other suspects in the syndicate accuse used to accept bribe of officials, rice mill owners from rice millers, commission and middlemen involved agents getting sub-standard in embezzlements. Among grains, at times showing more others allegedly indulged procurement on papers that in corrupt practices by CBI actual supplies while acceptsharing money were Deputy ing bribe. Investigation also revealed that amount worth Rs General Manager of FCI Rajiv Kumar Mishra who was ar-4000 was being collected from rested for receiving a bribe of every truck carrying stocks in godowns allegedly being Rs 50,000 from one Ravinder Singh Khera, the CBI said that shared by the General Manfew other senior officers of ager, Deputy General Man-Punjab Government are also ager, AGM, Research officer in on CBI radar. Information lab, Storekeeper, Headquarter reveals that among the 74 alexpenses and towards other leged accused, 34 are serving miscellaneous expenses.

### **Preparations underway** for Modi's visit to K'taka's Kalaburagi on Jan 19



Kalaburagi (Karnataka): Preparations are underway for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Karnataka's Kalaburagi district on January 19, his second trip this month to the poll-bound state. During the visit, Modi will

distribute property documents to the residents of 'tandas' (makeshift houses for SC/STs in villages) at a mega event at Malkhed.

It is for the first time in the history of Karnataka that these documents are being distributed to 51, 900 tanda residents.

The beneficiaries are chosen from the Hyderabad-Karnataka region districts of Raichur. Bidar, Yadgir and Vijayapura, according to Revenue Department officials.

The state Minister for Revenue R. Ashoka has been holding a series of meetings with officials in Kalaburagi to make it an impactful event.

A huge helipad, is being constructed for the event, while 600 cooks will be deputed to cook food and 200 counters will be opened on the day of the event.

The beneficiaries will be brought in 2, 582 buses, according to the Minister.

Kalaburagi is the home turf of AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge and after his defeat in the last parliamentary elections, he wants to prove his might in the upcoming state Assembly polls.

Karnataka's ruling BJP wants to defeat his plans not only in Kalaburagi but in the entire northern region of the state.

### Bihar education minister does not have enough intelligence to understand Ramcharit Manas<sup>77</sup>- Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA Ambala

Harvana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij, while reacting to Bihar Education Minister Chandrashekhar's controversial statement on Ramcharitmanas, up in the morning, do Ram- Minister Anil Vij said that shops said that "YEH DESH RAM KA Ram in the evening, do Ram- are open in the neighboring HAL IO NAHLBAM KA WO

Muslims do not need to take a certificate from Mohan Bhagwat to live in India. Responding to the question

asked on sex ratio in Haryana by a media persons, State Health Harvana

said in a statement recently that

### Drug smuggled from Pakistan at Indo-Pak border seized



**JAGMOHAN SINGH** Amritsar

Border Security Force (BSF) on Jan 9 seized 500 grams Heroin at Indo-Pak border which was smuggled to India from the neighboring country Pakistan.

In a statement issued by BSF official said that on 09th Jan' 2022 during afternoon hours, amidst dense foggy condition, BSF troops deployed on border heard sound of something thrown over the border fence towards own side of fencing in the area falling near Village - Mehandipur, District - Tarn Taran.

with saw, says post-mortem report NEW DELHI: A saw was used However, the smugglers to cut up the bones of Shradmanaged to escape taking advantage of dense fog. Further, dha Walkar, killed by her liveduring the initial search of in partner in May -2022, the the area, troops recovered one packet of narcotics (Heroin) - 500 Gms

autopsy report has revealed. The Delhi Police have got ie forensic analysi

NEW DELHI: CPI-M General Secretary Sitaram Yechury on Friday termed Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar's recent remarks against the basic structure of the Constitution as a "dangerous sign" for the future. Dhankhar, while addressing

the inaugural session of the All India Presiding Officers' Conference in Jaipur, had said that the Supreme Court had set a wrong precedent by its verdict in the Kesavananda Bharti case of 1973. Yechury strongly objected to

Dhankhar's comment, saying that it was an unprecedented attack on the judiciary.

He said that the Indian Constitution established the Parliament,

and Judiciary derive their author-

ity and power from the Constitution itself. He added that the Constitution

is supreme and no government exercising its autocracy of maand the Executive, Legislature jority can undermine the basic



Dhankhar's remarks against Constitution

dangerous sign for future: Yechury

structure of "our republic". The CPI-M leader added that

the Vice President is questioning the supremacy of the same Constitution under which he assumed office.

# India: Yogi Adityanath

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said that in the past eight years, the world has seen a transforming India and that Kashi (Varanasi) has embarked on a new journey with the launch of the longest river cruise.

Speaking at the flagging off of the world's longest river cruisenauguration of the Tent City by as an Minister Narendra Modi via video conferencing, Adityanath said that new doors of possibilities have also opened along with the launch of the river cruise.

centrality of the Constitution lay in upholding the sovereignty of India, which has been made apparent in its Preamble. Yechury said that people's sov-

ereignty cannot be substituted at any point in the thread of the constitutional scheme. He said that the vision of an

'intolerant', 'fascist' Hindutva nation is an attempt to destroy the secular and democratic character of the Republic of India, which should be rejected and resisted. Earlier, senior Congress leader

and former Union minister P. Chidambaram, while reacting on the same, had said that all

those who loved the Constitution should be cautious of the

#### Yechury explained that the "dangers ahead".

World witnessing transforming

Ram in the village

in yellow colour polythene.

#### Delhi Akali chief objects to helmet plan for Sikh soldiers in Indian Army



**NEW DELHI:** When the Sikhs elsewhere in the world have successfully secured the right to work with their proud turbans in jobs requiring helmets, the BJP government back home has initiated a plan to bring in so-called special helmets for Sikh soldiers in the Indian Army, which is completely unacceptable, Delhi Akali chief Paramjit Singh Sarna said.

The Indian Army has reportedly issued a request for proposal for the emergency purchase of nearly 13, 000 helmets for Sikh troops through a fast-track procedure.

"What is this happening? From the World Wars to the war with China in 1962, with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971 to the Kargil conflict, the Sikh soldiers fought at the frontline bravely wearing their turbans. What's the motive behind getting them to wear helmets now?" Sarna asked. He reminded the BJP government that even the British tried to introduce helmets for Sikh soldiers in World War II but couldn't because the move was rejected Sikh troops. He asked the government to drop its helmet plan for the Sikh soldiers of the Indian Army with immediate effect.

of her 23 bones which were report before Saket Court, " recovered during the course

of investigation.

pieces which help the police in such cases.

It has been learnt in the report that her bones were cut with the help of a saw and

Shraddha Walkar case: Bones cut

was conducted in AIIMS on Tuesday.

"The post-mortem analysis has suggested that her bones saw. Now we will submit this

the source said. Walkar and Aftab Amin

According to sources, it is Poonawalla had met through called Osteological study or the dating app 'Bumble' in biophysical study of the bone 2018. They had come to Delhi on May 8, and shifted to Chattarpur area on May 15. On May 18, Poonawalla allegedly

killed her and then chopped her body into 35 pieces and similar sharp edged weapon. threw her body parts across The post-mortem analysis various places over a period of 18 days.

He was reportedly inspired by the American crime show 'Dexter', which tells the story were cut with the help of a of a man with homicidal tendencies who lives a double life.

"Today is an important day. In the past eights years, the



(form)," Aditvanath said.

He added that along with Kashi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand are also "entering into a new era". Highlighting the landlocked geographical feature of Uttar Pradesh, the Chief Minister said, "Being a landlocked state, UP used to yearn, as exporting MSME products to the international market used to be expensive.

NAHI KISI KAAM KA". He was addressing a press conference at his Ambala camp office and took a dig at the Education world has seen a transforming In-Minister of Bihar and said that dia. Kashi (Varanasi) has embarked "I do not think that the minister has read Ramcharit Manas and on a new journey. The oldest city of the world (Kashi), which is famous if he has read it, it seems from as the spiritual and cultural capital his statement that he does not of India, in the past eight years has have that much intelligence that can understand. While giving emerged on the global stage in new advice Vii said that "YEH DESH 'kaya ' (physique) and new 'kalevar' RAM KA HAI, Jo NAHI RAM KA, WO NAHI KISI KAAM KA", do not spread disharmony in the country by talking like this. Home Minister said that the people of this country do Ram-Ram as soon as they wake

s and cities Ram is living in every where and no question mark will be tolerated on that, he added.

Home Minister retorted on the statement of AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi and said that who is forbidding anyone from living in India, everyone should live together, why do you jump. Vij said that Mohan Bhagwat said that everyone has the right to live in India, that>s why we say that common civil code should be brought soon and he will ask them to support common civil code because everyone should be equal and no one should have any special rights. Significantly, Owaisi had

is coming from there and our districts are also affected from the same places, which are located around NCR or other states. He said that their details have been asked to be made, and the Chief Ministers of these states will be written that why ten ultrasounds are opened in a street. Vij said that a meeting has been held regarding the sex ratio and strict cognizance has also been taken on it. He said an action plan has been chalked out in consultation with all the officers and CMOs. Vij said that strict action will be taken on this and checking will be carried out at all the ultrasound centers of the state.

will become 'cancer' and will

also referred to a central em-

powered committee report

that 31 hills or hillocks have

vanished in the state's Aravalli

area. The disappearance of hills in Rajasthan could be one

of the reasons for the rise in

pollution levels in Delhi, the

and Auditor General (CAG)

report also said Rajasthan's

Earlier, the Comptroller

apex court had said.

In 2018, the Supreme Court

### Illegal mining will lead to many Joshimaths in Rajasthan, warn veterans

is seeing today will be seen in Rajasthan somewhere after 25 years if the present menunchecked in the desert state, veteran environmentalists say while warning of a "disaster which is out of expectation".

"There are many hills which have gone missing in the state. In fact, on the other hand, hills have been created on plains by the locals by dumping garbage, " Congress MLA Bharat Singh quipped while mentioning the insensitivity of people engaged in illegal mining in the state.

Bharat Singh has been vocal on the issue of illegal sand mining and has been attacking his own government. He recently wrote a letter to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and demanded the dismissal of state Mining Minister Pramod Jain Bhaya, terming him "land

mafia" Speaking to media, Singh said, "Joshimath story will be repeated in Rajasthan too. It is sad that governments realise the gravity of the issue when the situation goes

JAIPUR: What Joshimath out of control. In our state too, Joshimath story is being repeated... The illegal mining in the state has thrown many ace of illegal mining remains challenges out, however, everyone seems to be sitting with folded hands. They will wake up from slumber when disaster happens.

The Congress MLA further said, "The entire ecology has changed in the region. The sad part of the story is that such facts are being reviewed under its economic ambit, keeping monetary prospects in mind and hence everyone has joined hands in this illegal act... Unitedly, they are engulfing hills.

Singh said that he will protest in Mining Minister's constituency on January 23, the day when the Assembly session starts in Jaipur.

Meanwhile, environmental activist Mahendra Kachhwa, said, "Illegal mining and Rajasthan have become synonymous. In fact, these mafias have not even spared forests and have entered the core areas of forests, threatening the tiger breed. There has been



massive destruction in Ranthambore in core tiger conservation areas... many illegal mines are running in areas spread over 1, 100 hectares of land."

"The sad part is that the miners have dug 30 feet deep pits in jungles, even in areas inside Ramgarh Sanctuary where tigress goes to deliver. There is rapid encroachment and mining inside jungles and hunting also goes rampant. If forest area gets disturbed, the surrounding areas will also be affected, "he added.

"Jawai Sanctuary, Ranthambore national park and Sambhar lake are all dominated by these illegal mining mafias. Salt mafias dominate in the Sambhar region. The results

of it are out in open. The lake which once used to dry during May-June has now dried in November and December... The reason is simple, there is no trained dedicated staff to check it (illegal mining) and there is no protection for the staff who raise voice (against it). Eventually open murders are being reported in the state, " Kachhwa asserted. leave people crying."

Like Singh, he also believes that Rajasthan will see Joshimath-like situation in the future. "What we are facing in Joshimath, after 25 years you will see the same situation here as encroachment and mining are increasing and the area is turning into concrete jungle". Babulal Jaju, another en-

vironmentalist said, "Illegal mining has brought the state in a pathetic situation. It (illegal mining) is going on in almost all districts like Bharatpur, Alwar, Rajsamand and many more. Rivers have dried up because of this malpractice. Sand has been dug out from rivers openly under the nose of officials which has affected the aquatic life.'

He warned: "Joshimath story will surely be repeated in Rajasthan if there is no full stop to illegal mining. The reason behind Joshimath story is greed and lust for unwanted development. They want to turn nature into business. Same story is being repeated here. There is greed for uncontrolled development, which mines department granted, renewed and extended mining leases violating Supreme Court's orders against mining in the Aravali mountain range. Illegal mining in Rajasthan which has a rich reserve of copper, lead, zinc, rock phosphate, soapstone, silica sand, imestone, marble and gypsum in the Aravalli mountain range

has razed several hills over the years, said sources. Recently, a saint self-immolated in the state protesting against the illegal mining in

holy Braj area alleging that holy hills are disappearing courtesy illegal mining.





## Rehabilitation norms crucial for eviction

he Supreme Court's timely intervention has halted the forcible eviction of some 50,000 people from Haldwani in Uttarakhand, where the occupants are accused of squatting on railway property for decades. The Uttarakhand High Court had taken a tough stand against the residents, and passed a slew of directions that would have entailed their eviction within a week, backed by force, including the deployment of paramilitary forces. It is significant that the Bench underscored the human angle to the issue and spoke about the need for rehabilitation before eviction while staying the order. The court has ruled that it was not a government order but only a communication on how to manage the land, and it does not amount to declaring it as 'nazul land', that is, land that has fallen into the hands of the state by escheat. As one of the nazul rules is that there cannot be sale or lease, the court rejected all claims made by occupants based on purported documents for lease, sale, and, in some cases, purchase through auction. Conflicts between occupants of public land and the state that wants to reclaim the land are a never-ending saga in the country. A shortage of housing, as well as inadequate recognition of the right to shelter, means that large masses of people encroach on vacant land, be it on the bed of water bodies or government property. This often leads to attempts to evict the occupants and spawns litigation. The Haldwani eviction effort has unfortunately taken communal overtones, and there appears to be a clamour for the early eviction of the Muslim residents. India does not have a good record on rehabilitation of those evicted from public spaces, and this case presents an opportunity to the Supreme Court to lay down the law on meaningful rehabilitation as well as effective prevention of encroachments.

#### **DR. HARVINDER KAUR**

indirectly depends on the agriculture sector. Crop insurance is a crucial and key issue for the survival of agriculture. The unpredictability of agricultural yields and products often results in windfall losses making the lives of farmers debt-ridden and pathetic. The economic decisions involved in agriculture are massive and need to be recognized as such. Crop insurance is directly linked with the security of farmers in India. For instance, students of economics are familiar with the COBWEB theorem. A farmer has to take the decision to produce a particular crop minimum of six months before marketing so assurance of minimum support price is a must in agriculture. Every industry can increase or decrease its production according to the demand in the market but a farmer can not as he has sown the crop six months before, it reaches to market and the standard law of demand and supply of Dr Marshall does not work in food production. A farmer never knows what will be market and weather conditions in the coming next 5 to six months. The Cobweb theorem describes this dilemma of a farmer. How the market forces and nature play a major role in deciding the price of agricultural products as two third of total land has no irrigation facilities in our country. A farmer can be ruined because of a lack of demand and low prices. Even plenty of production can also ruin him when the price falls because of more production when supply surpasses demand and the equilibrium price falls. This is called poverty in prosperity in economics. Even the developed capitalist economies, where free markets supposedly rule, highly subsidize their farming communities. As agriculture depends on nature and undoubtedly is a risky occupation and this discourage farmer to invest and he rarely thinks of making agriculture a profession. has done a cost-benefit analysis of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana(newly launched crop insurance scheme by the Central Govern-

ment) implemented in every state of India, in collaboration of with the respective state. The agricultural sector performs a vital role in developing the Indian economy and it can be considered the backbone of the industry and service sector. The agricultural sector still depends upon the weather and climate conditions, which is always uncertain and unpredictable. Crop insurance is one of the ways through which farmers may be protected from the financial loss of their crops against

natural disasters In Haryana, the first crop insurance scheme was introduced in 2004 during the Kharif season [4] through the Agriculture Insurance Company (AIC). The government of Haryana adopted this National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) with the collaboration of Govt. of India. A new scheme was introduced in 2009 in Haryana on a pilot basis known as the Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS). In 2011, a new scheme named

Modified National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (MNAIS) was started. Finally, the Government of Haryana implemented the central-sponsored scheme Pradhan Minister Fasal Bima Yojna (PMFBY) in 2016. It replaces all the previous schemes. we conclude that only a few schemes are implemented in Haryana state from India's various schemes from time to time. Here, the need arises to assess the performance of various crop insurance schemes in Haryana.

The studies should be done to evaluate the performance of the crop insurance schemes implemented in Haryana. only a few schemes are implemented in Haryana in comparison to other states of India. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana performs better continuously and proves beneficial for the farmers of Haryana. As a policy implication, policymakers should frame a provision of no claim bonus for the farmers

In 2016 Prime Minister launched a new crop insurance scheme that replaces all of India's prevailing vield crop insurance schemes by giving the slogan of 'One Nation One Scheme' In Haryana, PMFBY was implemented in Kharif 2016 for cotton, paddy, bajra, and maize and in Rabi 2016-17 for wheat, barley, mustard, and gram. This scheme was based on the area pproach. This scheme was compulsory for loanee farmers and voluntary for non-loanee farmers. Under this scheme, premium rates are 1.5 per cent for Kharif, 2 per cent for rabi, and 5 per cent for horticultural crops. The major difference between the PMFBY and the previous crop insurance scheme is that the premium rate under the PMFBY scheme is reduced and expands coverage of crops. This scheme was a more farmers-friendly provision that used advanced technology to estimate the losses accurately and make the ayment on time to the farmers

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

# Go for farmer–friendly insurance

bout 46% population directly or



**EDITORIAL** 

**COPINION** 

INDIA'S POSITION IN THE FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT IS VITAL. IN TERMS OF THE WORKING POPULATION, INDIA IS POISED TO BECOME THE WORLD'S LARGEST LABOUR FORCE BY 2027. INDIAN COMPANIES ARE IN A BETTER POSITION AND IMBIBE HOPE IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT.



**NARVIJAY YADAV** 

hile millions of jobs are being lost around the globe and big IT corporate houses are laying off their regular employees, Indian companies are in a better position and offer hope in terms of jobs. In the past, giant companies like Facebook (Meta), Amazon, and Twitter employees in bulk announced the removal of 18,000 i.e. 6 percent out of its 2.5 lakh employees. USbased software company Salesforce has also prepared to lay off 10 percent of its staff. At present, there are 80,000 employees in this company. Actually, the work of these companies had shot up during the Covid era, which is now decreasing fast. But in India, the situation is the opposite, and 2023 looks very promising. India>s position in the field of employment is vital. In terms of the working population, India is poised to become the world>s largest labour force by 2027. Recording Jobs India>s survey states that 45 percent of the leading companies are preparing for 20 percent of new recruitments. In the second half of the year, India will move forward in the manufacturing sector and domestic demand will increase

= BOOKS: REVIEW



This is the time to learn new skills and upgrade yourself. Prime Minister Modi said at the Youth Festival held in Hubli recently that the youth need to learn new skills so that they can prepare themselves for the jobs of the future. This is a very important time when the whole world is looking toward India and its youth. This is the first time that both hope and portunity are on Indiass side the youth that if they have new ideas then they should not care about being ridiculed. New ideas are initially ridiculed. Regardless of this, you need to work on your idea. India is currently one of the five largest economies in the world and soon it will be counted among the top three economies of the world. As many as 48 percent of the 3,000 Indian companies surveyed in the latest Employment Outlook survey by Manpower Group say they will add more jobs in the days to come. Of these, 34 percent of companies do not want to make any changes in their existing workforce. The hiring outlook in India has been found to be good compared to other countries.

#### 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.

"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it."

- Henry Ford

### THE FINANCIAL WORLD

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EDITOR\* ABDUL WASEY

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here. Some big foreign brands like Apple and Volvo are setting up their innovation centers in India. Last year, 50,000 new jobs were created in this sector and this trend is expected to continue further. Companies will recruit new heads for clean energy technology in the auto sector. The highest demand will be for posts like program manager, electronic engineer, system engineer, etc. There is a lot of hope in the field of the Internet and IT. Apart

from delivery professionals, there will also be a demand for analytics experts. A lot of employment will be generated due to performance marketing. Tech companies will focus their attention on quality. A lot of recruitment has already taken place in this sector. According to CII>s IndiaSkills Report, India>s employability score is above 50 percent, which means half of the candidates who apply for jobs are employable.

Narvijay Yadav is a senior Journalist & Columnist. Views are personal

### Book discusses cases that shaped financial landscape

xamining 15 judgments that have shaped the financial landscape of India, an upcoming book by senior advocate and author Saurabh Kirpal will offer insight into judicial thinking in matters concerning the economy since independence.

"Fifteen Judgments: Cases that shaped India's financial landscape" will hit the stands on November 21. It is published by Penguin Random House India (PRHI)

The book examines major judgments delivered on a variety of subjects, ranging from the environment and sex discrimination to disinvestment and insolvency, to show how far reaching the role of the court has been in influencing the economic development of India. "The book is not a legal text

aimed solely at lawyers but is an attempt to demystify the process of judicial adjudication. The law as well as the historic and socio-economic context of the issues at stake are discussed in a language accessible to the lay reader," writes the author in his introduction of the book. The judgments, including RC

Cooper v. Union of India (the 1970 case for bank nationalisation) and Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (the 1997 case on how to deal with the menace of sexual harassment against women at workplaces), have been examined to give the reader a flavour of the jurisprudential philosophies at different times in the country since Independence.

According to the publishers, the 15 judgments also trace the long path of the economic history of the country.

'The texture of these rivalries has undergone paradigm changes during the past 100 years but the suspicion of the big powers against each other continues to haunt the world'

"From the almost laissez-faire conception of the economy in the fifties to the socialism of the seventies and eighties; from the recognition of the effects of liberalization in the 90s to the attempt to reign in the perceived excesses of liberalization, the judgments reflect the sentiment of the era that they were delivered in," it added.

matters covering diverse subjects Kirpal, who has been practising at the Supreme Court for over two decades, is also the editor of

from commercial to constitutional law.

#### **FIFTEEN**<sup>®</sup> JUDGMENTS CASES THAT

#### FINANCIAL Fifteen Judgments Cases that Shaped India's Financial Landscape By Saurabh Kirpal

the 2020 released book "Sex and

the Supreme Court", an anthol-

ogy about issues relating to law,

St Stephen's College in Delhi, read

law at the University of Oxford

and did his masters in law at the

He did a brief stint with the

United Nations in Geneva before

returning to Delhi where he has

been practising at the Supreme

Court for well over two decades.

He has appeared in a range of

University of Cambridge.

Kirpal, after studying physics at

gender and sexuality.

Penguin Portfolio SAURABH KIRPAL 288 pages; Rs 599

of clients he has appeared forfrom Anil Ambani in his legal battle with his brother to being counsel for Navtej Johar, Ritu Dalmia and others in the case that led to the reading down of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code.

A self-described 'accidental activist', he is also a trustee of the Naz Foundation Trust, the NGO that first fought for decriminalization of homosexuality in India. He is the editor of the recently released book Sex and the Supreme Court, an anthology about issues relating to law, gender and sexuality.

The new book examines fifteen judgments that have influenced the financial destiny of India. With significant macroeconomic dimensions, these judgments, when explored, show a long-term impact on the economy.

In doing so, judgments from different times of history have been examined to give the reader a flavour of the jurisprudential philosophies at different times in the country since Independence.

This is reflected in the variety

### CORPORATE **GINDUSTRY**

#### 7th edition of MP Global Investors Infosys Q3 results: Net profit jumps 13 per cent Summit begins in Indore to Rs 6,586 crore, revenue up over 20 p c main focused on helping businesses

#### FW DESK

The two-day Global Investors Summit (GIS) organised by the Madhya Pradesh government began on Wednesday at the **Brilliant Convention Centre** in Indore. This is the seventh edition of GIS, and the state government has high hopes from business houses to invest in Madhya Pradesh.

Addressing a gathering of 431 delegates from 84 countries, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that industrialists have become familiar with the environment prepared for industries in the state.

Chouhan said that the seventh edition of GIS will prove to be a milestone for the state's \$550 billion economy. He was

referring to the aim of making

the state's economy grow from \$150 billion to \$550 billion by 2026. "The Global Investor Summit (GIS) is global in the true sense as representatives of 82 countries are participating and there are 10 partner countries involved. The President of two countries, several foreign

US-based global sandwich chain

Subway, whose control has been

held by the families of its co-

founders since its inception,

may be up for sale soon, with

an estimated valuation of over

\$10 billion, media reports said.

tered quick-service food chain,

known for its signature sub-

marine (sub) sandwiches and

wraps, has retained advisers to

explore a sale, the Wall Street

Subway refused to comment

"As a privately-held company,

on the purported plans.

go ahead at all.

The Connecticut-headquar-

countries will be participating in the summit. Many international industries and trade organisations also participating in it, Chouhan said

Chouhan said that over 5, 000 industrialists and 70 big industrial houses are participating in the summit. "There is immense enthusiasm for inministers, finance ministers, and vestment in Madhya Pradesh, mineral ministers of different not only among the domestic

investors, but investors from across the world. When Indore's super corridor and roads were discussed, I used to compare them with America. Today, representatives of many countries are watching the work done in the basic areas, including cleanliness. Continuous work is being done for greenery and environment protection, "he said.

Chouhan also assured the investors, saying that the demand for land will be fulfilled on priority.

'There is sufficient availability of land in the state. The work of providing it for the establishment of industrial units will be done on priority. About two acres of land are available in the land bank created for Madhya Pradesh industries. "he said

#### **ARUN KUMAR RAO** Bengaluru

IT major Infosys announced on Thursday its Q3 financial results, with net profit up over 13 per cent year-on-year to Rs 6,586 crore in comparison to Rs 5,809 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. The company's consolidated revenue from operations also increased 20.2 per cent to Rs 38,318 crore. The attrition rate for Infosys dipped to 24.3% on a 12-month trailing basis, from 27.1% quarter ago. Margin has dipped by 200 basis points on year, but largely stable sequentially. Infosys' performance in the quar-

ter reported better than its larger rival, Tata Consultancy Services Limited, (TCS) which missed profit estimates and flagged challenges in Europe as clients tightened spending due to the ongoing global economic slowdown



Salil Parekh, Infosys, CEO and MD said, the revenue growth was strong for the quarter, with both digital business and core services growing. "This is a clear reflection of our deep client revevance, industryleading digital, cloud, and automation capabilities, and the unrelenting dedication of out employess", Parekh said.

"As reflected in the large deals momentum, we continue to gain market share as a trusted transformation and operational partner for our clients. Our end-to-end capabilities and global scale make us a preferred choice as clients look at consolidating vendors. We re-





the impact of seasonal weakness in operating parameters,". "Attrition

reduced meaningfully during the

quarter and is expected to decline

further in the near-term," he added.

formed bourses that it started share

buyback program through open

market route from December 7 and

till date, it has bought back 31.3 mil-

lion shares worth Rs 4,790 crore or

51.5 per cent of total authorisation

of Rs 9300 crore at an average price

of approximately Rs 1,531 per share

(compared to maximum Buyback

price of Rs 1,850 per share)

Capital allocation:-- Infosys in-

Automaker BMW has recalled over 14, 000 electric vehicles for a software malfunction that may lead to a loss of power and an increased risk of a crash.

The recall covers certain iX SUVs and i4 and i7 sedans produced between October 14, 2021, and October 28, 2022. The software issue relates to

the high voltage battery electronic control unit, according to BMW. "The high voltage battery

electronic control unit (ECU) software may cause an interruption of electrical power, " it said in the recall notice.

Specifically, a misdiagnosis can sporadically occur within the battery management electronics, which could cause the electronic control unit to reset.

"If a reset occurs, this could cause an interruption of electrical power, " according to the company.

The owners of these cars can drive vehicles while waiting for a software update to fix the problem.

Last year, the automaker recalled a "small number" of 2022 i4 sedans and iX SUVs due to the risk of battery fires. According to the US Na-

tional Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a short-circuit in a high voltage battery increased the risk

of a fire. The recall was issued after BMW became aware of "a non-US field incident involving a 2022 BMW i4 eDrive40".

In June last year, Ford Motor recalled nearly 49, 000 Mustang Mach-E electric crossovers over battery safety concerns, and told dealers to temporarily halt selling the

popular electric vehicle. The battery issue affects Mach-Es that were built from May 27, 2020, through May 24, 2022, at the automaker's Mexico plant.

#### Ethanol blending hiked from 1.5% to 10% since 2013-14: Puri



#### IDP Education strengthens Iconic global sandwich chain Subway heading for sale? launch of 4 new offices

India presence with

IDP. a leader in interna tional education services, will launch four new offices in India by February to help Indian students realise their overseas education dream.

With this expansion, IDP will have 73 offices across the country, leading on the path of the maximum number of physical presence across India in the international education industry. The offices will be inaugurated in Delhi (North). Dilsukhnagar (Hyderabad), Khanna (Punjab), and Hoshiarpur (Punjab). Looking at the growing demand for study abroad, IDP also plans to grow its existing offices at Guwahati,

we don't comment on owner-Jammu, Calicut, and Trissur ship structure and business with larger teams. With its world-class counselling and digital innovation, IDP Education helps students pursue their academic goals in popular countries such as Finding no takers for fugitive diamantaire Nirav D. Modi's Australia, Canada, the US, the UK, New Zealand, and Ireland

one property, its price has been slashed and the DRT has and provides end-to-end study abroad assistance right from ordered its re-auction, along choosing the best destination, with certain other prime assets, programs and institution, comin one of the cases pertaining to the Punjab National Bank pleting applications and visa requirements, applying for (PNB) scam. education loan insur ance, money transfer services, accommodation, overseas bank account, SIM card, etc.

ast week, th ery Officer Ajeet Tripathi put up the HCL House in Marol for e-auction -- plus three other lots of properties -- to recover a portion of the outstanding of a staggering Rs 22, 13, 16, 39, 411.



Journal reported, citing people plans. We continue to be fofamiliar with the developments. Quoting people as saying cused on moving the brand forthat the process may attract ward with our transformational potential corporate buyers and journey to help our franchisees be successful and profitable, " private-equity firms, the paper the company was quoted by the said that the process is still in its early stages and there is a WSJ as saying. possibility that the sale may not

Set up by 17-year-old Fred DeLuca and financed by Peter Buck in 1965 as 'Pete's Super Submarines' in Bridgeport, Connecticut, it had several name changes before finally becoming Subway in 1972. It began fran-

chisee operations in 1974, while its first global store was opened in Bahrain in December 1984. Subway has over 21,000 establishments across the US and over 40,000 in over 100 countries around the world, where it suitably changes its menu in line with local preferences.

Becoming one of the world's largest restaurant chains by aggressive expansion, it, however, saw sales plateauing while several competitors also emerged.

### Auto Expo 2023 begins, Maruti Suzuki launches concept electric SUV eVX

**NOIDA**: After a gap of three years, the Auto Expo-2023 started at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida on Wednesday morning.

On the first day of the event, the Maruti Suzuki, the largest seller of cars in India, launched its first electric SUV (sport utility vehicle), concept electric SUV eVX, which will run 550 km once fully charged.

The first two days -- January 11 and 12 -- are reserved for the media and VIPs. It will be open for businesses on the next day on January 13 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The event will open for the general public from January 14 to 18. It will start at 11 a.m. each day. However, the closing timings are 8 p.m. for January 14-15, 7 p.m. for January 16-17 and 6 p.m. for January 18.

Major car brands like Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, MG, Kia, BYD, Toyota, Lexus,

Opera House.

year. However, some key players like BMW, Skoda, Volkswagen, Audi, Mercedes-Benz and more have decided to keep a distance from the show. Similarly, no major

The major attraction in the event will be Maruti Suzuki Jimny 5-door, Maruti Suzuki

EV, BYD Seal EV, 2023 Kia Carnival, Kia EV9 Concept,

this year.

Hyundai Ioniq, Hyundai Nexo, 2023 Hyundai Grand i10 Nios and more. It is likely that some models like Tata Harrier and Satwo-wheeler brand is parfari facelift, 2023 Hyundai ticipating in the Auto Expo Verna, Hyundai Creta facelift, Maruti Suzuki Swift Sport,

Honda City facelift, Honda mid-size SUV will make their public appearance at Baleno Cross, Tata Punch the event

Diamantaire Nirav Modi's HCL House price slashed, DRT orders re-auction in Feb-23 Airlines in India to add Trading Pvt. Ltd. -- all operat-ing from a common address at





On this occasion, Piyush Kumar, Regional Director, South Asia and Mauritius, IDP Education, said: "Our aim is to fulfil the study abroad dream of every student in India. Launching these four new offices is another step to getting closer to our customers and providing them with the best services. We pride ourselves in being the one-stop solution for all international education requirements and support our customers at every part of their study-abroad journey.

The international education industry is growing at a rapid pace. Almost 1.8 million Indian students are expected to study abroad by 2024, with total student spending exceeding \$75 billion

When it went on the block in September 2022, the unsold HCL House, comprising the entire building with the land, carried a reserve price tag of Rs 52 crore, which has now been slashed to Rs 40 crore, as per the DRT-I announcement. Besides, the DRT-I has put

on the auction block other assets of Modi, including Offices No. at Peddar Road is going up for of Rs 66 crore, plus over Rs 1.72 crore outstanding maintenance dues till December 2021.

Another property of Modi, the 6th floor of the Mafatlal Centre in Nariman Point along



with four parking slots will also go under the e-hammer with a reserve price of Rs 62 crore. besides unpaid maintenance charges for five years coming to over Rs 1.17 crore till May 2022.

Modi's huge residential 4-BHK flat in Grosvenor House 2001-2002 on the 20th floor of auction sale with a reserve price the posh Peninsula Park B in of Rs 15.87 crore, further details Lower Parel with a reserve price of which are not available. Modi also has another address in the prestigious Al Shera Towers, Dubai. The encumbrances or outstandings on HCL House

and Grosvenor House are not known and all the properties

shall be auctioned off on the basis of 'as is where is' and 'as is what is'. The e-auction is scheduled for February 10 -- a week after the DRT-I ordered the sale of Modi's two tony flats in the YOOPUNE housing scheme in Pune, valued at a total of Rs 18 crore, on February 3.

In the fresh auction list concerning PNB versus Firestar International Ltd, the names figuring are Modi and his group companies like Bentley Properties Pvt. Ltd., MAK Business Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., ANM Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., NDM Enterprises Pvt. Ltd., Neeshal

B) in Ban Complex. The February 3 and 10 e-auctions may help the PNB and a consortium of around 15 banks to recover a miniscule portion of massive dues, pending since the past five years after the country's mega-banking scam was admitted by these banks in

Paundra Enterprises Pvt. Ltd.

and Radashir Jewellery Co. Ltd.

-- all registered in a single ad-

dress at the Bharat Diamond

February 2018. After the PNB's complaint on the scam, estimated at over Rs 14, 000 crore, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered the first offence in January 2018 -- but by then Modi, his wife Ami and other accused had already fled India. Later, other probe agencies like Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Income Tax Department (ITD) entered the picture targeting the two prime accused -- Modi and his maternal uncle Mehul C. Choksi -- but both had flown the coop well before the scam erupted to shake the roots of the Indian banking sector.



As Indigo Airline has expanded its fleet to 300 aircraft, the countrys airlines' fleet is likely to add over 100 aircraft every year till the next few years as per the expected growth in the aviation sector.

Civil Aviation Ministry officials said that there were about 400 aircraft in 2013 and in 2021-22, the number increased to 700. Airlines in India are going to add 15 per cent capacity or 100 to 110 aircraft per year and the aviation sector is looking at close to 1, 200 aircraft by 2027.

Officials said that expansion of the fleet size of an airline is a commercial decision and therefore each airline decides induction of aircraft keeping in view commercial viability, traffic demand and its busi-

Barring the Covid period, the aviation traffic has witnessed consistent growth. The all-India passenger growth as projected by the Airports Authority of India for the next few years is 371 million passengers in 2023-24 and 412 million in 2024-25.

Similarly, airport infrastructure has also recorded corresponding growth in the last few years. Officials said that the total number of airports has nearly doubled from 74 in 2014 to over 141 in 2022. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the

Mopa International Airport in Goa for which the foundation stone was laid in November 2016. Developed at a cost of around Rs 2, 870 crore, the airport has been built on the theme of sustainable infrastructure.



Before this, Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar, the first Greenfield Airport of Arunachal Pradesh, was inaugurated in November, 2022.

Keeping in view the growth in aviation traffic, the government has accorded in-principle' approval for setting up 21 Greenfield Airports across the country

These 21 airports include Mopa in Goa, Navi Mumbai, Shirdi and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Hassan and Shivamogga in Karnataka, Dabra (Gwalior) in Madhya Pradesh, Kushinagar and Noida (Jewar) in Uttar Pradesh, Dholera and Hirasar in Gujarat, Karaikal in Puducherry, Dagadarthi, Bhogapuram and Oravakal (Kurnool) in Andhra Pradesh, Durgapur in West Bengal, Pakyong in Sikkim, Kannur in Kerala and Donvi Polo. Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh. Out of these, many Green-

field airports including Durgapur, Shirdi, Kannur, Pakyong, Kalaburagi, Orvakal (Kurnool), Sindhudurg, Kushinagar and Donyi Polo, Itanagar and Mopa have been operationalised.

In keeping with the growth in the aircraft and passenger traffic, the aviation regulator has issued nearly 1100 commercial pilot licenses in 2022 as against 862 licenses in 2021. Officials said that there are 34 DGCA approved Flying Training Organisations (FTOs) operating at 52 bases in the country. Of these, IGRUA at Amethi (UP) is under the Central government, eight are under state governments and 25 are in the private sector.

NEW DELHI: The government has increased ethanol blending in petrol from 1.53 per cent in 2013-14 to 10.17 per cent in 2022 and advanced its target to achieve 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol from

2030 to 2025-26, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Puri said on Tuesday. He said that India has been able to navigate through the most formidable energy crisis the world

has seen since the 1973 oil crisis thanks to its energy security strategy focussing on diversification of energy supplies, increasing India's exploration and production footprint, and meeting energy transition through gas-based economy, Green Hydrogen and electric

vehicles.

Puri said that India has increased the number of its crude oil suppliers from 27 countries in 2006-07 to 39 in 2021-22, adding new suppliers like Columbia. Russia, Libya, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea among others

"At the same time, we haveA strengthened our relationship with countries like US and Russia, " he added.

The minister further said that diesel prices, which in India between December 2021 and December 2022 rose by only 3 per cent, went up by 34 per cent in the US, 36 per cent in Canada, 25 per cent in Spain, and 10 per cent in the UK.

### Exela Technologies Signs Strategic Partnership with Quintes Global

CHENNAI: Exela Technologies, Inc., a global business process automation ("BPA") leader, announced a partnership with Quintes Global ("QG"), an innovative company with a differentiated first-ofits-kind offering of 'Dedicated Captive Solutions' headquartered in New Delhi, India. Exela will deploy its cloud-based **Robotic Process Automation** ("RPA") solution, to enable end-to-end digitization of processes performed by QG for its customers under the unique Dedicated Captive Model.

Exela provides an intuitive and fully customizable RPA solution that can be leveraged to create taskspecific software bots that deploy best practices using big data, machine learning, artificial intelligence, natural language processing, and predictive analysis. The



Exela's Exchange for Bills transformation of their cusand Payments ("XBP") porttomers' organizational profolio within the Information cesses," said Sandeep Sapru, and Transaction Processing President, India and Philip-Solutions ("ITPS") accountpines, Exela Technologies ing segment, which generat-BPA. He added, "We look forward to solving major pain ed \$874.2 million in revenue for FY 2021. points such as extended turnaround times, manual errors, "Exela is maximizing its re-

lationships and infrastructure and sub-optimal capacity utiin Asia to drive revenue within lization and are building and the region. We are excited to partner with Quintes Global solution is a component of to enable end-to-end digital

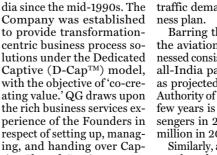
challenges.

Rakesh Sinha, Founder and CEO, Quintes Global emphasized the value of the strategic partnership between QG and Exela by stating, "QG's Transformation Capability as a Service ("TCAAS") offering combines the optimization of existing technology as well as bringing in new-age technology for effective transformation. Exela brings immense value to our aggregated capabilities for cutting-edge technology and tools that help in driving end-to-end enterprise services transformation. We firmly believe in our mantra of 'Transformation in a Box' - blended and balanced focus on technology, process redesign and change enablement."

QG is a venture of a few pideploying bots to make the oneering leaders who have led processes robust, smart, and the Business Process Manefficient to eliminate these agement value story of In-

Company was established to provide transformationcentric business process solutions under the Dedicated Captive (D-Cap<sup>TM</sup>) model, with the objective of 'co-creating value.' QG draws upon the rich business services experience of the Founders in respect of setting up, managing, and handing over Captive Shared Services across a spectrum of support functions and industry verticals and a wide variety of business process transformation and automation assignments serving some of the marquee

Exela is a business process provide digital transformation solutions that improve efficiency, quality, and productivity.



global and Indian companies. automation (BPA) leader, leveraging a global footprint and proprietary technology to

### BANKING S FINANCE

# Experts predict India's emergence as 'third pole', despite GDP growth worries

country is truly outperforming in the coming decades, it's the world's soon-to-be third largest economy (and its largest democracy), India, Eurasia

Group said in a report. "In my view, 2023 will be remembered for India's emergence as the third pole of the world, " wrote Shigesaburo Okumura. Editor-in-Chief of Nikkei Asia, in a recent article.

Another important factor not to be neglected is India. This year will likely be remembered for marking its emergence as the world's most populous nation, Okumara wrote

According to the UN, China's opulation last year was 1.426 billion while India's was 1.417 billion. In July, the UN forecast that China's population would fall in 2023 while India's would surpass it.

By 2050, the UN expects India will have 1.6 billion residents and China 1.3 billion.

A growing working-age population is an important

**World Bank projects** 

growth of India at 6.6

per cent next fiscal

If any major middle-income source of economic growth so India's emergence will give it new power in international politics, Okumara said.

Moreover, decoupling between the US and China and the rebuilding of technology supply chains to exclude China

benefits India. Apple is building iPhone 14s in India Natarajan Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata Sons, has talked of plans to produce semicon-

ductors in the subcontinent. In March, India will host the plenary session of the Trilateral Commission for the first time. This year, it is also chairing the Group of 20, a role that will involve a leaders' summit and many ministerial meetings. The Modi government will be eager to show leadership ahead of India's own elections in 2024,

Okumara wrote. The new year thus could world, involving the US, China and India. New Delhi is undeconcluded



Challenges, however, are mounting for India's economy with the GDP forecast at a halfentury low

Motilal Oswal Financial Services forecast in a note that after growing strongly for two consecutive years, India's real GDP growth would decelerate to mark the beginning of a tripolar 5.2 per cent YoY in FY24, while nominal GDP growth would weaken even sharply to 7-7.5 niably on the rise, "Okumara per cent, led by easing inflation. A combination of factors

such as slower global economy, fading pent-up demand and normalising base effects would contribute to slower real growth.

With an expected retail inflation print at just 4.3 per cent and a mere 1 per cent growth in the wholesale price index (WPI) in FY24, the GDP deflator could be around 2 per cent, dragging down India's nominal GDP growth to the lowest level compared to any year between the early 1970s and FY19 (that

is, half-a-century pre-Covid period), the report said.

Such slow growth rate would have some serious implications for the macro economy and financial markets.

"Overall, we believe that unlike the past 12-15 months, the narrative will reverse in FY24. Inflation concerns will take a back seat and growth worries will resurface. This may be true not only for India, but also for the entire global economy. At the same time, restrictive monetary policy will fail to boost financial markets. Accordingly, CY23 could be very painful, the report said.

Revenue of listed companies is highly correlated with nominal GDP growth (and WPIinflation). In case of single-digit nominal GDP growth, corporate sales growth is also expected to weaken from an average of >30per cent YoY in the past seven quarters to single digits in FY24. With an expectation of

weaker nominal GDP growth in FY24, we estimate India's

debt growth to also weaken. Thus, bank credit growth could also moderate from 15-16 per cent in FY23 to 12 per cent in FY24 with a downward bias, the report said.

As central banks across the world simultaneously hike interest rates in response to inflation, the world may be edging toward a global recession in 2023 and a string of financial crises in emerging market and developing economies that would do them lasting harm, according to a comprehensive new study by the World Bank in September. Several historical indicators

of global recessions are already flashing warnings. The global economy is now in its steepest slowdown following a postrecession recovery since 1970. Global consumer confidence

has already suffered a much sharper decline than in the runup to previous global recessions. The world's three largest economies -- United States, China, and the Euro zone -- have been slowing sharply

Paytm approved the

**Morgan Stanley** 

incentive scheme of Rs

26 billion for promotion:

India's leading digital pay-

ments and financial services

company Pavtm will be a key

beneficiary of India's Unified

Payments Interface (UPI)

incentive scheme, brokerage

firm Morgan Stanley said on

Thursday. The Union Cabinet

on Wednesday approved the

incentive scheme of Rs 26 bil-

lion for promotion of RuPay

Debit Cards and low-value

### Rs 13,573 cr invested via MF SIPs in Dec' 22



**NEW DELHI:** The systematic investment plans (SIP) of Indian mutual funds gathered Rs 13, 573.08 crore from investors, up from Rs 13, 306.49 crore invested in November 2022, the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) said on Tuesday.

Last month's SIP contribution was much higher than Rs 11, 305.34 crore that was invested in December 2021. "Investors will continue

to invest in the India growth story through the mutual fund route over the near future. Investors are looking forward to a growth-oriented budget which should have a positive impact on the markets.

"The importance of investing in equity markets for the longer term goals is not lost on investors and the same is reflected in the ever-increasing awareness and adoption of SIP as a goal-linked route to create wealth over the long term. This month almost 24 lakh new SIPs were registered, which shows increasing investor belief in the instrument. SIPs are the simplest route to build a disciplined habit of regular investing, "

AMFI's Chief executive N.S. Venkatesh said. According to the AMFI, the industry's net assets under management (AUM) at the end of December 2022 stood at Rs 39, 88, 735.37 crore (Rs 37, 72, 696.31 in December 2021) and the average AUM at Rs 40, 76, 170.53 crore.

The retail AUMs (Equity+Hybrid+Solution-Oriented Schemes) in December 2022 stood at Rs 20, 55, 212 crore and the average AUM stood at Rs 20, 88, 946 crore.

According to the industry

counts stood at 6, 12, 42, 531 for the month of December 2022 by a net addition of 7, 85, 102 from the month of November which was at 6, 04, 57, 429.

Mutual Fund folios have been continuously crossing the highest ever milestone since the last three months. This indicates a healthier and disciplined investment habit and systematic mode of investment by small investors, AMFI said.

"New SIPs added in Dec'22 is expected to be around 23 lakh, but the net addition seems around 7.85 lakh (month on month), suggesting SIP cancellation ratio at 66 per cent, a 25 month high. This is a reason of concern in the SIP trends that we are seeing. Though there were instances of lower net additions seen in some months even in the past, the overall trend seems to be getting stable, " Sriram B.K.R., Senior Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

"Going forward, challenges would be on, above average redemptions induced either by profit booking or heightened volatility and cancellation of SIPs. Market falls or fluctuations for months in a row can be perplexing at times, but what we have seen in equities is that it rewards those with discipline and patience handsomely in the long term. Investors should continue their SIPs through the market volatility in order to reap the fullest gains of this whole systematic approach of investing in

quities, " he added. The Index Funds have shown a net inflow of Rs 6, 736.52 crore in the month of December 2022 as compared to Rs 8, 601.73 crore in the

body, the number of SIP ac- month of November 2022

### Paytm logs Rs 3.46 lakh cr in GMV slowdown in economic for Q3 FY23, a robust 38% growth



**NEW DELHI:** Predicting a slight decline in India's economic growth, the World Bank said that India will grow at 6.6 per cent in next financial year from an expected 6.9 per cent in 2022-23. However it said that India is likely to remain the fastest growing economy of the seven largest emerging-market and developing economies (EMDEs). For 2024-25, the growth rate is projected at 6.1 % . "The slowdown in the global economy and rising uncertainty will weigh on export and investment growth," it said. "Before falling back toward its potential rate of just above 6 per cent, In-

#### Leading payments and financial services company Paytm on Monday announced its business operating performance for the third quarter in FY23, saying its robust growth continues with Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) for Q3FY23 at Rs 3.46 lakh crore.

The company said it continues to reign the market in offline payments with 5.8 million merchants now paying subscriptions for payment devices, while user engagement also continues to grow. In its stock exchange filing, Paytm said that the aSuper App' continues to see growing consumer engagement for its wide array of payment and financial services.

The company's average monthly transacting users (MTU) for the quarter ended December 2022 stood at 85 million, registering a robust growth

of 32 per cent (year-on-year).



strong adoption by consumers and merchants. We continue to remain focussed on execution and are confident on our profitability plans, a the com-

pany said. Paytm reached a new milestone in offline payments with 3.8 million devices added yearon-vear.

Highlighting its plans for its core payments business, the "Our payments and lending company said that with a focus

YoY. monetization beyond MDR, its

focus on subscription services continues to expand. "With our subscription as a

service model, the strong adoption of devices drives higher payment volumes and subscription revenues, while increasing the funnel for our merchant loan distribution, "said Paytm.

The company's loan distribution business, in partnership with top lenders, continues to business continues to scale with on creating additional payment witness an accelerated growth

#### with disbursements growing

330 per cent YoY. Loans worth Rs 3, 665 crore were disbursed in the month of December. The number of loans grew 117 per cent YoY to 3.7 million for December, and 137 per cent to 10.5 million cumulative loans for the three months, ended December 2022. As a result, total disburse-

ments for three months ended December 2022 was Rs 9, 958 crore, a growth of 357 per cent

processed through the platform for Q3FY23 aggregated to Rs 3.46 lakh crore (\$42 billion), marking a YoY growth of 38 per cent.

"Our focus over the past few quarters continues to be on payment volumes that generate profitability for us, either through net payments margin or from direct upsell potential, " the company said in its stock exchange filing.

#### **BHIM-UPI** transactions (P2M) for FY23, compared with Rs 15 billion in FY22. "Apart from banks, Paytm should be a key beneficiary of

by the company.

propriation of funds

for alleged cheating and misap-

claim for payment made against

the invoices of non-existent ven-

dors amounting to Rs 71.7 crore,

a claim for Rs 1.66 crore penalty

The damages sought include a

the above. On our estimates, Paytm would have received 5-7 per cent of the FY22 incentive, and assuming a similar share for FY23, this would represent 3-5 per cent of our contribution profit estimate (1 per cent higher than what we previously assumed for FY23), " the brokerage firm mentioned.

### **Centre approves promotional Delhi HC asks Ashneer to maintain decorum in a plea filed by BharatPe**

The total merchant GMV

dia's growth is anticipate to slow, to 6.6 per cent in FY24," it said.

### 599.9 grams **Gold valued at Rs** 33,71,438 seized at SGRDJI Airport



**JAGMOHAN SINGH** Amritsar

The Customs Department in Amritsar has seized smuggled Gold having value Rs 33,71,438.

Commissioner of Customs, Mr. Rahul Nangare in a statement issued here today stated that on January 12, one passenger arriving from Australia via Singapore by Scoot Airlines was intercepted on the basis of profiling and suspicious movements by Customs officers at Shri Guru Ramdas ji International (SGRDJI) Airport, Amritsar.

On carrying out his personal search, raw gold weighing 599.9 grams of 24 Carat in the shape of five Kadas (bangles) valued at Rs. 33,71,438/- was recovered. The same has been seized under the relevant sections of the Customs Act. Further investigation is in progress, he informed.

### 100 per cent road tax exemption for EVs till 2025

TN government extends



**CHENNAI**: With the aim to Earlier, the state government promote electric vehicles in the had granted 100 per cent state, the Tamil Nadu governrelaxation between November ment has extended 100 per 3, 2020 and December 31, cent exemption of road tax for 2022. As the state government EVs till December 31, 2025. had not extended the It has extended the relaxation further, registration relaxation for both transport of electric vehicles disrupted and non-transport e-vehicles across the State. Following registered in the state, said a the request from the vehicle G.O. issued by K Phanindra manufacturers and dealers, Reddy, Additional Chief the transport department has Secretary, Home Transport now extended the sops for two department on Friday. more years.

### incentives for Rupay debit card, low value BHIM-UPI transactions

**NEW DELHI:** The union cabinet. chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday approved Rs 2,600-crore incentive scheme to promote Rupay debit card and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions (person-to-merchant) in FY23.

In-line with the objective of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', the scheme will also promote UPI Lite and UPI 123PAY as economical and user-friendly digital payments solutions and enable further deepening of digital payments in the country, across all sectors and segments of the population. The Union Cabinet has also approved the setting up of three national-level multi-state cooperative societies under Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002. Earlier in 2021, the Cabinet, chaired by PM Modi, had approved an incentive scheme to promote RuPay Debit cards and low-value (upto Rs 2,000) BHIM-UPI transactions (Person-to-Merchant (P2M)] in the country.

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Monday asked BharatPe's former Managing Director Ashneer Grover's counsel to advise his client (Grover) to maintain decorum following his termination from the fintech company while hearing a plea filed by the company seeking orders to restrain Grover and his kin from making defamatory statements against the company, and other reliefs.

Justice Navin Chawla said: This social media has brought us down to this level. Ask him to maintain decorum." The court made its remark after seeing some tweets and allegations made against BharatPe and its staff by Grover. The court was informed that some of those utterances contain language that prevents their repetition in open court.

The court then ordered: "Issue notice on defendants' application to the plaintiff. Notice accepted. Three more weeks time granted to the defendants to file their responses to the interim applicants. Written statements to be filed in response to the main suit as well."



On December 8, the HC had totalling Rs 7.6 crore made to vendors purportedly providing issued summons to Grover and his wife and others and gave them recruitment services, payments of two weeks' time to file replies to Rs 1.85 crore made to a furnishthe interim relief application filed ings company, payments for personal expenditures up to Rs 59.7 In its suit, running into 2, 800 lakh and payment of Rs 5 crore pages, BharatPe has claimed damdamages for loss of reputation to ages worth Rs 88.67 crore from the company caused by tweets and Grover, his wife, and his brother 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 second time for their children. The family also used the company's funds to travel abroad. paid to GST authorities, payments

The suit further claimed that the Grovers used the company funds to pay the rent and security deposit of their posh duplex and for home appliances, too. The duplex was first taken over by Grovers as the company's guest house but eventually they started living there, the suit claimed.

BharatPe had filed an interim relief application seeking disclosure of assets of Grover and his family members, and an interim injunction restraining them from making defamatory/ derogatory statements about the fintech company, its directors, employees and/or publicising the same. The application also sought direction to defendants to delete/remove within a period of five days all statements, tweets, social media posts, books, retweets, hashtags, videos, press conferences, interviews, comments, etc., made against the company and orders granting liberty to BharatPe to approach all social media platforms, media organisations, publications, websites, blogs, etc., to seek deletion/ removal of all such material.

# Global economy staring at two recessions in same decade which would mark a first in over 80 years

is slowing sharply in the face economy into recession. of elevated inflation, higher interest rates, reduced investment, and disruptions caused by Russias invasion of Ukraine, according to the World Banks latest Global Economic Pros-

pects report. Given the fragile economic conditions, any new adverse development -- such as higher-than-expected inflation, abrupt rise in interest rates to contain it, a resurgence of escalating geopolitical ten-

**NEW DELHI:** Global growth sions -- could push the global

This would mark the first time in more than 80 years when two global recessions have occurred within the same decade, the World Bank said.

The global economy is projected to grow by 1.7 per cent in 2023 and 2.7 oer cent in 2024. The sharp downturn in growth is expected to be widespread, with forecasts in 2023 revised down for 95 per cent of advanced economies and the Covid-19 pandemic, or nearly 70 per cent of emerging markets and developing



economies.

"The crisis facing development is intensifying as the global growth outlook deterio-

rates, " said World Bank Group President David Malpass.

"Emerging and developing countries are facing a multiand weak investment as global capital is absorbed by advanced economies faced with extremely high government debt levels and rising interest rates. Weakness in growth and business investment will compound the already-devastating reversals in education, health, poverty, and infrastructure and the increasing demands from climate change."

In the US, growth is forecast to fall to 0.5 per cent in 2023 -- 1.9 percentage points

year period of slow growth below previous forecasts and external demand compounded driven by heavy debt burdens the weakest performance outside of official recessions since 1970.

In 2023, euro-area growth is expected at zero per cent -- a downward revision of 1.9 percentage points. In China, growth is projected at 4.3 per cent in 2023, 0.9 percentage point below previous forecasts. Excluding China, growth in the emerging markets and developing economies is expected to decelerate from 3.8 per cent in 2022 to 2.7 per cent in 2023, reflecting significantly weaker

by high inflation, currency depreciation, tighter financing conditions, and other domestic

headwinds. The report offers the first comprehensive assessment of the medium-term outlook for investment growth in emerging markets and developing economies. Over the 2022-2024 period, gross investment in these economies is likely to grow by about 3.5 per cent on average -- less than half the rate that prevailed in the previous two decades.

### **INTERNATIONAL**

### War plunges Ukraine's Piyush Goyal mocks 'mini' trade deal with US, concedes no FTA on offer GDP to record 30.4

per cent in 2022

In the wake of Russia's ongo ing war against Ukraine, the country's GDP declined by a record 30.4 per cent last year, the Economy Ministry said citing preliminary estimates.

"In 2022, the Ukrainian economy experienced a decline economy suffered its largest of 35.5 per cent compared with losses and damage in the enthe same period in 2021, it tire history of independence, said. The Ukrainian economy "Xinhua news agency quotsaw a 3.4-per cent growth in ed Economy Minister Yulia 2021. The country's GDP is Svyrydenko as saying. expected to rise 3.2 per cent

In December 2022, this year, according to the gov-Ukraine's GDP declined 34 ernment's projection.

#### Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that India was not interested any longer in the "mini" trade deal that was once under discussion with former US President Donald Trump and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is not on the table because President Joe Biden's administration in not currently interested in negotiating one with any country.

India and the US have decided to focus instead on greater market access, ease of doing business between the two countries and a larger footprint egarding trading, investment and business, the Minister said on Wednesday. Two specific targets for this elevated engagement were semiconductors and

37 per cent in November, the Ministry said. In the fourth defence production. quarter of last year, Ukraine's Goyal made the remarks while speaking with reporters after discussions with US Trade Representative Katherine Tai at the 13th meeting here in Washington D.C. of the Trade Policy Forum, which is the highest platform for trade talks between the two countries. Recent trade relations between India and the



US have been marked by lack of significant progress, specially after President Biden took office, in stark contrast to the frenetic pace set by the two sides just a year before in the run-up to Trump's visit to India in February 2020, in anticipation of a deal. Talks collapsed and Goyal had blamed the Trump administration for it, saying the former administration kept shifting the

goal-post. "In terms of the mini trade deal, I think it was too mini to really merit any great effort on both sides, " Goyal said of the negotiations. "And we have even forgotten most of those issues. We are looking at much much bigger ambitions in our trade

with the US.' Goyal had himself led the talks on the Indian side then, as now, and he had at one stage exuberantly declared that the deal was "just a phone call away". The Minister was also dismissive of the withdrawal of preferential zero-duty benefits the US had provided to imports from India under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) programme. Trump had ordered the with-

drawal of the benefits in 2019, just a few days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi started his second term, to compel India to concede more market access to US products as part of a trade deal Washington was trying to inflict on New Delhi.

## to Syria



The UN Security Council UNSC) has adopted a resolution to confirm the re-authorisation of cross-border aid deliveries into Syria for another six months till July 10.

Resolution 2672 confirms Resolution 2642 of July 2022, which decides to extend the authorization for aid deliveries through the crossing at Bab al-Hawa on the border with Turkey for six months till January 10, 2023, and decides that a further extension of an additional six months will require a separate Security Council resolution, reports Xinhua news agency.

Resolution 2672, which won the unanimous support of the 15-member Council, requests the UN Secretary-General to provide a special report on the humanitarian needs in Syria no later than June 10.

# UNSC confirms re-authorisation of cross-border aid deliveries to Syria Joe Biden's legal team finds fresh batch of classified documents

US President Joe Biden's legal team has found a fresh batch of classified documents at a second location following the initial discovery of confidential material dating back from the time when he was Vice President at his former think tank office in Washington, media reports said.

Since the original batch of about 10 documents was discovered in November 2022 at the Penn Biden Center think tank near the White House, but only came to light this Monday, Biden's aides have been searching for any additional classified materials that might be in other locations he used, an informed source told CBS News on Wednesday.

The classification level, number and precise location of the fresh batch of documents was not immediately clear. It was also not known when the additional documents were discovered and if the search for any other classified materials Biden may have from the former Barack Obama admin-



House has not yet commented on the newly discovered batch. Earlier on Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre declined to answer questions about the first cache of

files during her daily press briefing, the BBC reported. "This is under review by the Department of Justice" she said. "I'm not going to go beyond what the president shared yesterday." On Tuesday, Biden said he was "surprised to learn there were any government records that were taken there to that office" which he periodically used from mid-2017 until the start of his 2020 presidential campaign.

### **Canada finalises agreement** to buy 88 F-35 fighter jets



Australian Cardinal convicted of child



abuse dies

Cardinal George Pell, whose conviction on child abuse charges shocked the Catholic Church before being quashed, has died of heart complications after hip surgery, officials said on Wednesday. He was 81. The former Vatican treasurer is Australia's highest ranking Catholic cleric, and the most senior Church figure ever jailed for such offences, reports the BBC. Cardinal Pell served as Archbishop of both Melbourne and Sydney before becoming one of the Pope's top aides.

# Indian-origin driver charged for killing 4 Sikh men in Aus crash

four counts of dangerous driving causing the death of four men from Punjab in Australia's central Victoria province.

er cent due to a certain sta

bilisation of the situation with

energy supply, after a fall of

who is recuperating in the hospital under police custody, was driving a Peugeot with four passengers inside when it collided with a Tovota Hilux ute at an intersection at Pine Lodge, near Shepparton earlier this month, the SBS Punjabi channel reported. Randhawa will be appearing in Melbourne Magistrates' Court on June 8. The four men died on the spot, the police said, adding that they are investigating whether

they were wearing seatbelts. The deceased men have been identified as Harpal Singh from the Mukstar, Bhupinder Singh from Jalandhar, Baljinder Singh

### Aussie police seize \$1mn cash, cocaine, methylamphetamine

hatchback parked nearby located a further 550 g of cocaine and 140 g of MDMA.

Following that, investigators executed two search warrants at related properties, where they located and seized a further A\$1.5 million cash, 2 kg of methylamphetamine, 2

draulic press machines, two ballistic vests, a firearm and ammunition, multiple driver's licenses and other items consistent with the manufacture of illicit drugs were also found on site.

Two more men, aged 18 and 35, were arrested at one of the properties and taken to the A subsequent search of a police station.



The agreement includes associated equipment, sustainment set-up and services, as well as the construction of fighter squadron facilities, the statement said. The acquisition will occur as a staggered process and acquisition plans for a number of aircraft are already confirmed with this process continuing until the full fleet of 88 jets is

acquired, it added.



rchaeologists confirm human habitation in

# A 41 year-old Indian-origin man, has been charged with

Harinder Singh Randhawa,

and Kishan Singh from Tarn Taran. "They belonged to the state of Punjab and were on visitor visas in Australia to see their extended families, "Melbournebased social worker Phulvinderjit Singh Grewal told SBS Punjabi. Grewal told the channel that the families of the four men "were inconsolable"

Victoria Police Acting Assistant Commissioner Justin Goldsmith told media that early signs pointed to a "T-bone type collision", that is, when the front of one vehicle strikes the side of another, forming a 'T' shape.

New South Wales (NSW) has charged four men after seizing more than 5 kg of cocaine and methylamphetamine, and cash worth \$1.03 million in Sydney.

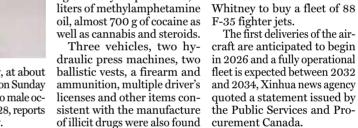
In a statement released on Monday, the NSW Police said that the officers stopped a sedan at Strathfield, a suburb in the



and spoke with the two male occupants, aged 23 and 28, reports Xinhua news agency. During a search of the se-

dan, officers detected about 2.3 kg of cocaine and A\$24, 000 in cash.

curement Canada. Estimated at C\$19 billion (\$15 billion), this is the largest investment for the Royal



Canadian Air Force in the past 30 years.



ner and not be an impediment assistance, assistance for the to the progress made in the handicapped, assistance and medica ce to the pregnan centres, adult education and encouraging others to acquire education, helping people living in far flung areas to maintain personal documentation and land records, providing legal assistance to poor people, vocational training in industry, educating people to enhance the agricultural productivity and finally to wean away people from growing poppy crops. These NGOs should be funded for a period of 20 years from the nine billion dollars blocked by the US and everyone knows that these funds legitimately belong to the people of Afghanistan. Every year, 500 million dollars should be allocated directly to these NGOs and since in the last one and a half year, Taliban has not kept its promise on most points mentioned in the Doha Agreement, the funds cannot and must not be routed through the government agencies. In this way Taliban government can belured into accepting the establishment of these NGOs.With this, their constant harping about the release of the blocked funds wouldalso stop. In the end, I would like to

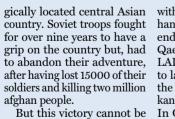


far back as 50,000 BC. The indigenous people were small farmers and herdsmen, as they are today. They were grouped into tribes with small local kingdoms, rising and falling through the ages. It is believed that the region had early trade contacts with Mesopotamia. Before the arrival of Islam in the 7th century, there were a number of religions practiced in ancient Afghanistan, including-Zoroastrianism, Surya worship, Hinduism and Buddhism.

Afghanistan is a landlocked mountainous country at the cross roads of central and South Asia. It has borders with Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In the middle ages and upto the 18th century, the region was known as Khorasan. The present day cities of Balkh,Herat, Ghazniand Kabul comprise the Khorasan area. Afghanistan is a notoriously difficult country to govern.Empire after empire, nation after nation have failed to pacify what is today the territory of Afghanistan. It is complete war material, finance therefore, called the 'Graveyard of Empires'.

Genghis Khan, in his bid to expand the Mongol Empire towards centralAsia and the middle east, invaded Afghanistan in 1219–21 but could not hold it for long, as he was defeated by the forces of Jalal-ad-Din at Parwan. Britain, in order to protect its Indian Colony from any invasion by the Russian Czars, played the 'Big Game' in

the area in order to check Russian influence in central Asia and the middle east. There were the area but in the first Anglo-Afghan war which was fought in 1839-42, all 4500 British were slaughtered by the afghan tribal warlords.



wholly attributed to the superiority of afghan mujahideen as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) forces under the United States, were providing and intelligence through covert operations and for this, CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) of US and ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) of Pakistan, were hand in glove with each other. At the end of withdrawal of soviet forces, no doubt, the visible victory went to Afghanistan but, in actual fact it was the

covert victory of America over the Soviet Union which was its cold war enemy after WW II.

to be taken over by the Taliban which was waiting in the wings three Anglo- Afghan wars in in Pakistan. The withdrawal of soviet forces also saw, a huge availability of military hardware left by the US and the Soviets troops and 12,000 civilians which became the legitimate property of Taliban when it took over the country in 1996. In 1979, the Soviet Union Taliban, with its medieval ways

with public lashings and public hangings. Their barbaric rule ended when they allowed Al Qaeda leader, OSAMA BIN LADEN to use the afghan soil to launch the 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers in New Yorkand the US response thereto.

In Oct, 2001 the US war in Afghanistan started and continued for 20 years.In these 20 years, USforces faced continuous guerrilla attacks from the mujahideens. At the end, the American public got fed up with this war and receiving body bags for such a long period of time. Itmade them sick which resulted in a hastv and ignominious withdrawalof US troops from afghan soil on 30th Aug, 2021. Their achievements are there to seefor the whole world! The Taliban were virtually

handed over the complete afghan territory on aplatter and the whole world condemned Now Afghanistan was free

this action. The Taliban had occupied Afghanistan on the 15th of Aug, 2021. But before the departure of US forces from afghan soil, the US signed an agreement with Taliban at Doha in Qatar that, once the US troops leave afghan soil, the Taliban would rule the country by forming an inclusive government in which

decided to prop-up a com- of governance, created terror in the representation of all ethmunist regime in this strate- the minds of common people nic groups would be ensured



and democracy would prevail. Women too would be given due representation in governance. Women education would not be stopped and justice would be delivered by keeping in mind the human rights principles. And in case, the future government fails to abide by the Agreement, it would not be recognized and therefore, no financial help would be forthcoming from the international financial institutions for the reconstruction and economic development of thecountry. It was also mentioned that the AfghanCentral Bank funds to the tune of nine billion dollars would be blocked by the US and not made available for the development of Afghanistan. The population of Afghanistan is around 40 million.

The nation is composed of a multi-ethnic and multilingual society. Ethnic groups in the country include Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks and others. Afghanistan has two official languages; Pashto and Dari. Pashto is spoken in most regions of Afghanistan. The country is an Islamic Republic and 90% of the population follows Sunni Islam, the rest are Shia muslims.

Pashtun aspirations to rule this country with Sharia laws, have not allowed the country to progress in tune with the new four walls of the house.

world order. Its leaders, or to put it more appropriately, its warlords, never allowed scientific education to its people which kept the whole country devoid of holistic progress. This was one of the major reasons that outside powers came to Afghanistan and used its people for their ulterior motives and ultimately leaving the country in lurch. A large number of countries in the Arab world impose Sharia laws but they do not hinder the scientific outlook and progress of their people. The problem with the autocratic leaders of this country is that, they listen to the Islamic clerics blindly and impose ultra-austere interpretation of Islamthus creating a near theocratic state in which, barbaric punishments

are handed down like public lashings and public hangings. The imposition of ultra-austere interpretation of Islam has not helped the country and its people. A country that debars half of its population to stay away and not be part of the progress and development,can only expect to remainin the lower rung of countries on a global scale. What a shame to see that in the 21stcentury, a government issues a diktat that the role of women is only, to

bear and deliver children as also to look after affairs within the

The women in the country are forbidden to seek education especially higher education; cannot run a business unless always accompanied by a close male relative such as the father. husband or brother. They cannot work in an office, be it government or private. Whenever, they step out of their home/ premises, even for a small routine errand, they must be accompanied by a male member of the family. All females except small children, must cover themselves withblack hijab. Is there a difference in afghan woman? This dumb to this question effectively!

It is noteworthy that nowhere in the holy book of Quran Sharif, hijab is strictly defined, though it is firmly rooted in Islamic tradition. It is often a personal and cultural concept. Many muslim majority coun-Tunisia and Turkey have made it illegal to wear hijab in public, schools, universities or government buildings while Egypt and Syria have banned the use of face veils in universities. A similar approach by the present afghan government is likely to help.

#### What Next?

It is very clear that the West wants the Taliban to run the NGOs who could be working for

education including the women women, running de-addiction education, societal harmony and fair legal system.

Russia is on the same page as India that Afghanistan being an Asiancountry, the finding of solution to its problems should be left to the Asian countries bordering it or situated in its vicinity.India is a very important country in its vicinity and it can't afford to ignore Taliban in order to safeguard against potential terrorist attacks by anti-India forces from the afghan soil. India also can't ignore very ancient historic and cultural ties with this country. Although India does not recognize the Taliban Government yet it has been providing medical assistance to the Indra Gandhi Children's Hospital, Kabul, Afghanistan. India has been sending humanitarian aid in terms of wheat and medi-

cal supplies. This contact must continue and at a later stage both the countries would find ways and means to establish a sound economic relationship. In my opinion the world owers have a collective responsibility towards the situation

the life of a prisoner and an in Afghanistan; its resolution will be time consuming and world won't be able to respond challenging. Foreign powers should not rush to fill the vacuum with ulterior motives, due to the geostrategic importance of Afghanistan.

The world body and more importantly the US has to catch the bull by its horns and make sincere efforts to bring the govtries like Kosovo, Azerbaijan, ernance of Afghanistan in tune with the present world order. The US is morally responsible to discipline the Taliban, not with the barrel of a gun but by showing compassion for the 40 million Afghans, most of

whom were not responsible for the attack on twin towers. One way forward is by asking the Taliban to allow establishment of a large number of

advise the law makers of America to start thinking out of the box-if they are sincere to bring reforms in Afghanistan. The President of the United States of America needs to sit back and deliberate; did a super power of 280 millionpeople (in the year 2001) require a 20 years of bombing campaign to avenge the twin towers attack on an already beleaguered country of 20 million people and send them back to the medieval ages?

> Brigadier (retd.) Raj Bhutani : (The author is a freelance writer, a war veteran of 1971 war and retired Brigadier with 32 years of service in the Indian Army)

> > . .

### **DILIT DOSANJH** is set to perform at the Coachella music and arts festival 2023



'Bigg Boss 16': Salman Khan dances

with Bharti-Haarsh's son 'Gola'

Indian singer-actor Diljit festival 2023 in April. The In-

their feed. The festival will be Dosanjh is set to perform at stagram handle of the festival headlined by South Korean girl the Coachella music and arts recently shared the lineup on band - Blackpink, Bad Bunny,

#### emoji in his tweet. In addition, the festival will also feature Pakistani singer Ali Sethi, whose song from 'Coke Studio' - 'Pasoori' has become a viral sensation. Last year's

edition featured Harry Styles, Billie Eilish, and The Weeknd, among many others, following the cancellation of the event in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the news of Diljit performing at the fest travelled, fans expressed their excitement over their idol gracing the stage. One fan exclaimed, "DILJIT DOSANJH AT COACHELLA ?! ?! This was the QUICKEST impulse purchase of my life and I have no regrets". Diljit retweeted the fan and put up praying hands

James Cameron says Leonardo **DiCaprio thought 'TITANIC'** was **'boring** 

Moments later, Bharti and Harsh, leave Gola and Salman on stage. As they go, Bharti shares: "Do din bachha sambhalna hain" and Haarsh adds, "Chachu ko pareshaan maat karna. Salman asks if Gola would

Bharti says, "Haan, yeh

Bharti ka bachha hain."

like to dance and they shake a leg to the actor's song 'Baby Ko Bass Pasand Hai' from the 2016 film 'Sultan'.

The promo was captioned, "Bigg Boss tonight 10pm on @colorstv..." In the brief but hilarious clip, Bharti can be seen wearing a pink ethnic outfit, while Haarsh is in a gold jacket, black shirt and black pants. Laksh is wearing a white and orange jacket with



Titanic' remains the biggest hit of Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio's ca reer, but it sounds like get ting the actor to star in the film was tough work for director James Cameron The filmmaker recent-

ly told People magazine that DiCaprio thought the 'Titanic' screenplay was "boring" and didn't want

to star in the epic disaster romance film. Cameron had to "twist" DiCaprio's arm, reports 'Variety'. "He didn't want to do a leading man, " Cameron

A third post, meanwhile, read: "People who want to see you win, will help you win. In other news related to

Kanye, it was said that he and his new wife Bianca went on honeymoon in Utah following their private wedding ceremony. Daily Mail reported that the embattled star and the Yeezy architectural designer ime at Amangi

Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi offers prayer at the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), Sikh's holiest shrine during Congress's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', in Amritsar on Tuesday. PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILL



### Navina Wadekar joins 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah'

Actress Navina Wadekar has been roped in to play the role of Bawri in Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah'. After Monika Bhadoriya, who was playing the character quit the show, there was a search for a new face and maker Asit Kumarr Modi has found Navina a perfect

replacement. As he mentioned: "I wanted a fresh and innocent face for the character of Bawri and we luckilv found what we were looking for. She has also promised commitment to the show."

"Our show is the most loved show by the audience, and we Tanmay Vekaria. Earlier, the

'Shehzada' shoot wraps up, Manisha Koirala shares update

Ronit also shared one of the

Kartik Aaryan and Kriti Sanon-starrer film 'Shehzada' wrapped up its shooting on Tuesday. The film also stars Ronit Rov and Manisha Koirala, both of whom took to social media to share the update with their followers.

Manisha took to the story section of her Instagram and uploaded pictures and a video from the film's wrap up party. In the video. Kartik and Kriti can be seen along with the film's director, Rohit Dhawan.



**Only female to** produce the highest number of Punjabi **Movies : Ravneet** Kaur Grewal

**POTPOURRI** 



It is said that with hard work and effort, you can achieve anything. And all this came true for Ravneet Kaur Grewal as well. Ravneet Kaur Grewal is a famous Punjabi producer who has rendered numerous hit Punjabi movies under the banner of her production Houses - Humble Music and humble motion pictures. Being one of the directors of the said production house, she has delivered her perfection and persistent effort into the house in a prime manner. As a result, Humble Motion Pictures & Humble Music are one of the biggest production houses in Punjabi Entertainment Industry. Apart from a producer, if her personal life is concerned, she is happily married to producer, actor and singer Gippy Grewal ( Rupinder Singh Grewal ) and is moth-er to three boys - Gurbaaz

#### veiled as part

#### ek minute pakado, main thak gayi." Salman replies, "Obvi-'Dabangg' song. ously, thakogi haan" as Haarsh A promo shared by the laughs on. blue pants.



channel Colors, showed Bharti

walking onstage calling out her

She then gives him in

Salman's arms saying: "Sir,

son's name "Gola.

LOS ANGELES: Reality TV star Kim Kardashian reportedly doesn't approve of her former husband and rapper Kanye West's alleged new wife Bianca Censori.

MUMBAI: In the upcom-

ing episode of 'Bigg Boss 16',

Salman Khan will be seen

turning babysitter for Bharti

Singh and Haarsh Limbachi-

yaa as they left their son Laksh,

lovingly called Gola, with the

According to a new report, it has been an open secret that Kim has long hated Bianca for no obvious reason, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Kim hates her, " an insider told Page Six of the 'Donda' artist's architectural designer wife. "She's pretty. And Kim hates pretty girls.

It was also said that it was well known around the Yeezy HQ that the SKIMS founder didn't like Bianca, who reportedly worked at Yeezy as an architectural designer for several years.

Kim allegedly suspected that Bianca ha secret agenda by



I'm in my quiet Remember that.

girl era. I don't have much to say." The nowdeleted post continued: "Just much to do."



challenge.' As revealed to GQ magazine earlier this year,

Cameron and DiCaprio hit another speed bump on the road to "Titanic when DiCaprio refused to screen test for the movie

Kate Winslet had already landed the role of Rose and Cameron wanted Di-Caprio to screen test with her before officially giving him the role of Jack.

need to fulfill their expectations. I am sure that they will

love Bawri, played by Navina Wadekar. Bawri is a girl from Kanpur and she is shown as the love interest of Bagha, played by

was not that noticeable. However, now the character will be given more prominence. Now in the show, viewers can see that Bawri is back from her town and promises to meet

Bagha in the garden but instead of meeting him, she just sends a message of breaking up. Bagha is surprised and wants

character Bawri was not seen in

every episode and her presence

to know the reason. While talking more about the actress, the creator of the

show adds that after looking at a number of talents, he finally found her suitable for the role.

all the warm vibes.

Rohit Dhawan, is Kriti's second film with Kartik. Prior to this, the two were seen in the 2019 film 'Luka Chuppi'.

pictures posted by Manisha in his story and expressed his Earlier, Kartik took to Instagram, where he shared a picture gratitude as he wrote on the picture: "(It) was so lovely coof himself dipping his feet in ice starring in this movie with you cold water. He was also seen @m\_Koirala. Hope to do it holding a large chunk of ice as again soon. Thanks much for he posed.

Kriti also shared the story on her Instagram. 'Shehzada', which is directed by Bollywood star Varun Dhawan's sibling



approaching Kanye.

Kim also appeared to recryptic quotes. Amid reports that her ex-husband has remarried, the 42-year-old star, who shares four kids with the rapper, shared a message on Instagram.

"I'm in my quiet girl era. I act to the wedding news with don't have much to say." The now-deleted post continued: "Just much to do." In another post, she added:

Sudarsan Pattnaik builds

"Just remember, the black goat. Keep doing you.

last week.

News of their shocking marriage broke on Friday. While the pair reportedly tied the knot in private nuptials. it is believed that the union is not legally binding as they sheep usually turns into the haven't filed a marriage certificate

up to record the video, Cameron said. "Leo didn' know he was going to test. He thought it was another meeting to meet Kate. So I said, 'Okay, we'll just go in the next room, and we'll run some lines and I'll video it'. And he said 'You mean, I'm reading?' I said, 'Yeah.' He said, 'Oh, I don't read'. I shook his hand and said, 'Thanks for coming by'. world's largest hockey stick

#### Chandigarh

Spend the day in your favourite sunshiny courtyard at Olive Café & Bar in Sec 26 and warm up with chef Anubhav Moza's new winter specials! All day, every day 12:00 pm onwards. The new winter menu offers dishes made with seasonal ingredients which are perfect for winters and has been curated with ingredients that help beat the winter chill.

### 'It was a beautiful torture': Ram Charan looks back at 'Naatu Naatu'



#### MANPREET SINGH Bhubaneswar (Odisha)

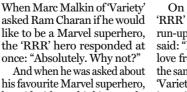
Ahead of the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup inaugural ceremony, eminent sand artist Padma Sri Sudarsan Patnaik sculptured World's largest hockey stick on the banks of Mahanadi River at Cuttack, where the 'celebration' event is scheduled for on 11 January to mark the opening of the mega hockey event starting 13th January at Bhubaneswar-Rourkela.

Sudarshan Pattnaik created a 105-feet long hockey stick, using 5000 hockey balls. The sand artist used over five tonnes of sand for the sculpture which also showcases the newly built Birsa Munda team of 15 students two full Hockey Stadium in Rourkela. Having taken two days

this installation.

days to complete the installation and it will be up for to complete this incredible display all of 11th January when thousands will throng art installation, Sudarshan Pattnaik has once again the Barabati Stadium to catch showcased the passion Odia glimpse of Bollywood stars sha has for the national sport. who will perform during the opening ceremony. He said, "There is a festive atmosphere in every village

"During the previous World you travel to in Odisha be-Cup, we had installed sand art cause of the World Cup. It at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium is a very special event for the and the art work depicted the people of Odisha and there major monuments of Odisha are celebrations everywhere. like Konark. This time we have To welcome everyone to this used the installation to welbeautiful state, we wanted to come all the 16 participating create something unique this teams to Odisha and we have time, that's why we thought of created 16 national flags in the using hockey balls and create installation," added an elated Pattnaik about this unique It took Sudarshan and his creation.



he said without thinking much: "Tony Stark." He was referring to the character Robert Downey Jr plays in the Iron Man franchise.

"Or maybe Captain America, why not?" Ram Charan added as an afterthought. "We have some amazing superheroes in India too, " he pointed out. "How about you invite one of our heroes over here?

Talking specifically about 'Naatu Naatu', he said: "My knees still wobble talking about it today. It was a beautiful torture and look where it has got us." Was the 'RRR' director S.S. Rajamouli hard on them during the terrific action sequences? Rajamouli said: "I took care of them like babies. No one ever got hurt." To this, Ram Chran added: "He spanked the babies too."

On the positive response 'RRR' has been getting in the run-up to the awards, Rajamouli said: "It humbles me that I get love from so many people." In the same spirit, NTR Jr had told 'Variety' in another red carpet interview: "We thought we had a winner, but it turned out to be more than a winner ... you don't

expect this to happen.' Earlier, the actor had tweeted: "Congratulations Sirji on your well-deserved #Golden-Globes award! I've danced to many songs throughout my career but #NaatuNaatu will forever stay close to my heart ... @ mmkeeravaani"

Cheering the win, 'Los Angeles Times' tweeted (and promoted the profile it carried of Rajamouli): "Last night, the audience at #RRRMovie's soldout Chinese Theater screening swarmed the stage to dance during the 'Naatu Naatu' number. Today, composer M.M. Keeravani won the Golden Globe for best original song."



Head Chef Anubhav Moza and his team have creatively used ingredients that are known to be favourites during winters; spices like paprika and saffron, and ingredients like figs form part of the culi-

of the 'Winter Specials' menu. Healthy options like flaxseed and sesame have been infused in some offerings. There has been some excellent experimentation done with seasonal vegetables and fruits. Seasonal roots like beetroot, black carrot and fresh herbs have been used quite innovatively in some dishes. A variety of cheese over and above the regular cheese have also been used quite well in the dishes.

Grewal, Ekam Grewal and Shinda Grewal. Ravneet's journey from zero to zenith was quite long as there was time when she used to juggle in Canada for work with her husband Gippy Grewal. With her constant support and their joint efforts, the couple managed to make their own identity in the Punjabi Entertainment Industry and now own the biggest projects of the same.



